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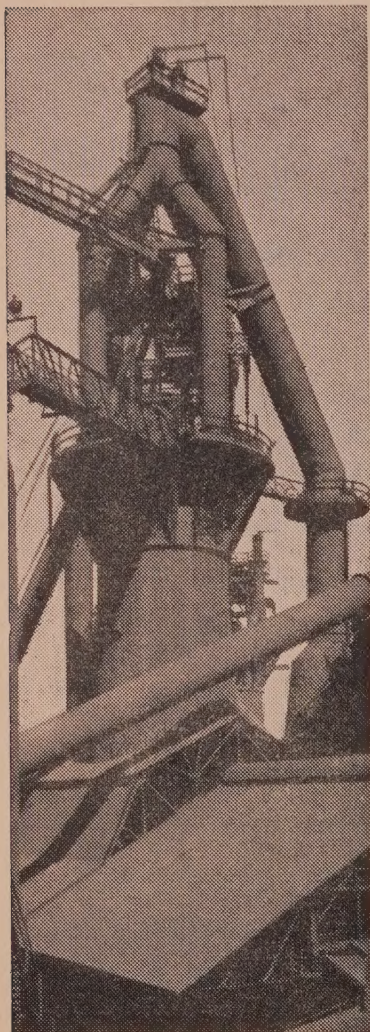
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# AUSTRALIA: LIMITED, HORRIBLE, AND UNLIMITED

*V.L.Borin*

FOR OVER a century Australian workers have disliked any newcomer. This sentiment has nothing to do with nationalism. It is not a matter of racial discrimination—for feeling could be as violent against English newcomers as against any others. The reason lies in the history of Australian development.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Australia's growth was determined as a wool-producer for the English textile industry. England also needed business for her merchant navy. The transportation of wool from Australia was profitable only if vessels could carry cargo to Australia, which had therefore to be kept a pastoral country importing all industrial products from England. Only a small sparse population could be carried under these conditions.

This plan of development was overturned by the discovery of gold. J. McBrien and a convict discovered gold in New South Wales in 1823, and the Polish explorer Count Strzelecki found it at Lithgow in 1836. Strzelecki wrote a detailed report on his discovery; but the Colonial authorities kept it secret, fearing that a gold rush would be the end of the penal colony.

Australia's modern history starts with the discovery and exploitation of gold in Victoria in 1851. In that year Victoria had only 97,489 inhabitants. By the next year there was 42,800 people on the goldfields—practically every able-bodied man in the Colony. Melbourne was deserted. There were no workmen; no servants to be had. Ships arriving in Melbourne could go no further because the crews deserted for the goldfields. Wages reached fantastic heights because of the shortage of labour. In 1852 Victorian diggers produced gold to the value of £8,875,128, an average of £211 per digger. At that time the wage of a labourer in England was 10s. a week. The Victorians became rich, and assertive in their own affairs.

Australian workers organized themselves quickly. Their original trade unions were rather craftsmen's guilds, but the shortage of labour made them powerful. On 21 April, 1956, the Victorian stonemasons forced an eight-hour day on the employers for workers in that trade. It was three years before

Marx published the first volume of *Das Kapital*, fourteen before Lenin was born.

In the decade following 1851 the population of Victoria rose from 97,489 to 539,764, and of New South Wales from 197,263 to 357,368. The increase was enormous, but there were still in England over a million paupers for disposal. Australian labour opposed any attempt to bring out these paupers. The long struggle against migration from the United Kingdom had started.

In 1861 an unskilled labourer in Australia earned 42s. a week, while in England the wage was still 10s. Australian wages were the highest in the world and the hours the shortest. The fear was that large immigration would bring Australian standards down to the English level.

On 2 January, 1861, a public meeting in Hyde Park in Sydney voted a Petition to the Legislative Assembly in which they asked that members of the House

not vote any sum during the present year either by estimation or resolution, for assisted or any other kind of immigration, as it is a direct interference with the labour market and an unjust application of the public fund.

This petition formulated the basic line of labour policy towards immigration for the next eighty years or so. The voice of labour could not be ignored because labour had a vote. Any member wanting labour votes had to oppose immigration to Australia. On 2 June, 1870, Mr Higginbotham speaking on immigration in the Victorian Legislative Assembly described migrants from the United Kingdom as 'human rubbish', and declared: 'How will you prevent England from exporting her paupers? You have never been able to prevent it under the regulation hitherto framed. The parson has always been able to get rid of the poor, shiftless, incapable parishioner.' This attitude was neither patriotic nor Christian; but as long as England prevented the development of industry in Australia it was the only right labour policy for the preservation of high standards for the Australian worker.

Up to 1860, in all 286,138 assisted migrants had been brought from the United Kingdom to Australia. After 1860 the arrival of assisted migrants slowed to the average of 9,000 a year. But in the eighties an economic crisis started in England and London pressed for a higher intake of assisted migrants. In 1883 some 38,054 assisted British migrants were taken to Australia. Labour in Australia reacted sharply. Poor wretched human beings who were not able to make their living in England were received with hate by their Australian kinsmen. On the NSW coal fields there were acts of violence against English migrants. In 1888

the intake of assisted migrants dropped to 9,408 persons and in 1898 to 102 persons. Immigration to Australia had been stopped by labour resistance.

Now came the turn of the Irish. In our times hate against foreigners or minorities is not just 'human nature' but is the result of interested propaganda. When Irish Papist was chained next to Anglo-Saxon Protestant on the way to Australia, there was no resentment and suspicion among them. But when Australia was becoming prosperous after the gold discovery and labour united in determination to maintain its standards, the best way for the masters to divide the workers was to remind every labourer of Anglo-Saxon origin that the Irishman was a Papist and a bad man.

The champion of this campaign was Henry Parkes. Originally a Chartist, he later took the side of the 'free traders' who represented English capital in Australia and finally was knighted for his services to the Empire. H.V.Evatt refers to Parkes's anti-Irish campaign in his *Australian Labour Leader* in the following terms:

When, in 1868, the Duke of Edinburgh was wounded at Sydney by a half-witted Irishman, Parkes exploited the occasion for his own political benefit and deliberately aroused the most bitter sectarian hatreds. He asserted at Kiama that the attempted assassination had been made in pursuance of a very elaborate and widespread Fenian conspiracy. A Select Committee found that there was no evidence whatever to support the charge.

This finding did not prevent Parkes from further stimulation of anti-Irish resentment and suspicion. In his speech of 10 March, 1881, in the Legislative Assembly he declared:

I would advance every opposition in my power to the bringing here of a majority of people from Ireland. I hope I may be able to express this opinion boldly and without any reserve, without being charged with bigotry or with a dislike of the Irish people. I say that I want to preserve a majority of Englishmen and the descendants of Englishmen in this country, and I want to preserve the teaching and influence of the Protestant religion in this country.

This declaration was clear and without any reservation. Parkes said that he did not dislike the Irish, as every cautious anti-semitic would say: 'Mind you, I am not anti-Jewish, but to hell with Jews!' By this declaration Parkes made a great tactical blunder. The Irish were taught to be British and allegiance to the British Empire was required from them. But Parkes enlightened every Irishman: British means English and Protestant.

Dr Evatt is correct in saying that Parkes propagated and

stimulated anti-Irish hatred 'for his own political benefit'. He was fishing for Protestant votes; but simultaneously a bigger issue was involved: the attempt to split labour unity, to make workers of English origin fight against their Irish mates.

The Australian Press joined the chorus. For years Australian journalistic wit was discharged in cartoons of the stupid Irish Paddy (and, of course, the Jew with crooked nose). Advertisements for vacant positions in newspapers were often concluded by the following note: 'No Irishman need apply'.

New Australians today have no idea what humiliation was suffered here by Australians of Irish origin. But this stupid, chauvinistic campaign reached just the opposite end to that intended. The Irishman is not naturally fond of organization. But abuses of his human dignity in Australia forced him into organization, and he became the backbone of the labour movement. And he got an excellent leader in the person of Cardinal Moran in Sydney. While the Protestant Churches were silent in labour disputes, Moran sided with labour. In 1901, Australia became a self-governing Commonwealth inside the British Empire. On 13 November, 1908, Fisher's Ministry took the helm in Australia. That was the result of the attempt to break labour unity by a campaign against the Irish.

Then came the Great War against Germany. The British Empire started to demolish its foundations. From the beginning of 1915 the allied forces in France were short of ammunition. England was compelled to purchase war material in the United States, spending its overseas funds in order to do so, and increasing the industrial power of the United States. But that was only one aspect of the war. A second, even more serious development was that England became unable to supply its dominions with industrial products in exchange for agricultural ones. In 1915 there was no more steel in Australia and the country was compelled to start its own industrialization. The Labor Government gave all facilities to the Broken Hill Company, and its brilliant manager Dalpert, a Dutchman by origin, went on the job. In 1919 the cost of steel produced by BHP in Australia was less than half the cost of imported steel.

With the beginnings of industrialization, Australia found itself at the crossroads: should it follow the American path or not?

The Americans became a nation in and through a revolution in which they fought and defeated the English forces—who were, anyhow, German serfs whom English merchants bought from German princes and put into English army uniforms. The

## AUSTRALIA: LIMITED, HORRIBLE, AND UNLIMITED

Americans ceased to be British, and became English-speaking Americans. They realized that they must populate their country as quickly as possible in order to make themselves strong and prosperous. They realized that no industry could be developed without a large population and a strong internal market. They realized the value of every adult immigrant. It takes fifteen years for a human being to become a productive member of the community. The production cost today would be about £1,500. This means that every immigrant who can start to work on the day after his arrival is an asset worth £1,500 to the community.

Until 1920, when the United States became more or less saturated, there was absolutely free immigration into the country. Whether the immigrant in the United States learnt English or not was his own affair. If he did not, he condemned himself to be a labourer to the end of his life. The quicker he learnt English the sooner he could get a better position. Every nationality and language is respected in the United States and their national anthems have been played on official occasions.

In 1919 Australia could have taken the American way. In 1920, immigration to the United States was limited to quotas. In defeated and prostrated Germany and Austria millions of hard-working and skilled people would have liked to immigrate somewhere. But they had nowhere to go.

The anti-Irish campaign died down in Australia. The 'stupid Paddy' disappeared from press cartoons, for he had proved himself to be too clever and too influential to be attacked. But bitterness was still in the minds of both sections of the Australian population. The Australian worker still did not wish to have any immigrants coming into the labour market. Nobody explained to him that an Australia which had embarked on industrial development needed more population if prosperity was to be maintained and increased. There was no leader courageous and farsighted enough to say: forget the past, and let us work for the future of Australia Unlimited. Therefore Australia remained an underpopulated country producing wool for export, and masses of frustrated Germans were left to the late Adolf Hitler's ministrations.

But by the end of the Second World War Australian political leaders were compelled to realize that something must be done for the future of their country. England could not supply Australia with industrial products and was unable to protect Australia any more. The age of the steam engine, sea power and imperialism was over.

In 1945 the Atomic Age started. The age of nationalism and

its way of thinking is gone. Feudalism existed as long as the armour of the knight, his castle and town walls protected the feudal system. The invention of fire arms was the end of feudalism, of its way of living and thinking. On 25 March, 1420, Zizka, the military leader of Czech Hussites with three hundred and six men, townsmen and runaway peasant serfs, annihilated by gunfire two thousand Bohemian armoured knights at Sudomer. That day was the beginning of the end for feudalism. On 5 August, 1945, one American atomic bomb killed one hundred and sixty thousand people in Hiroshima. That day was the beginning of the end of nationalism. The boundaries of the national sovereign state cannot be protected any more. Just as gunpowder demolished the boundaries of feudal communities and forced mankind to join into national units, so did atomic power demolish the boundaries of nation-states, and is forcing mankind towards cosmopolitan unity.

At the advent of the Atomic Age there was an underpopulated Australia alongside overpopulated Europe and Asia. To anyone who could see over the top of his nose it was obvious that either Australians will quickly populate their continent, or it will be done for them by force in the near future.

In 1946, both Labor and Liberal political leaders took the bold decision to open Australia to European immigrants. This decision required a public campaign which would explain the situation to the Australian people and fight against old prejudices. At the time when this decision was taken, the majority of people of the Australian middle class still lived spiritually in Victorian times, anxious to keep Australia English and Protestant. It was an anachronism because the English themselves were no longer imperialists and were reorganizing their Empire into the British Commonwealth of Nations. They were granting to negroes in Africa all the rights which some Australians try to deny to New Australians.

The majority of the Australian working class and its trade union leaders still believed that every immigrant represents a capitalist conspiracy against the Australian working-man's standard of living; and the Communists did their best to keep this prejudice alive.

Unfortunately no such public campaign was ever launched. But at least the Australian political parties and the press made a gentlemen's agreement not to attack the immigration programme.

The Australian press kept this agreement with one exception: *Truth*. In order to find out what kind of newspaper *Truth* was,

let us first observe the information it gave about the Australian people. Let us go through its issues of 1946, one year before the first European migrants arrived in Australia. According to *Truth*, Australian men bashed, kicked their wives, attacked them with beer glasses; they committed amazing brutalities, and lived in bigamy, while jealous ex-lovers set women ablaze, etc. What did Australian women do? They had lovers, were unfaithful, were swindlers, drank £18 weekly, lost stolen money at baccarat, etc. What else did Australians do? They were busy slaying fathers-in-law, doctors assaulted women, a husband with seven names was scarcely at home, wild brawls were frequent, thugs brutally bashed citizens and constables, farmers battered wives to death, sadists abounded, and councils were alarmed by perverts; Australians were engaged in all kinds of rackets, including funeral rackets; there was a reign of terror and crime in Darlinghurst.

An Australian stabbed six people at a party. Italian migrants were not present at that time in Australia and therefore the Italian Mafia was not responsible for this crime. When, eight years later, an Italian migrant stabbed another Italian, *Truth* demanded that New Australians be not permitted to possess pocket knives. And what did the police do before European migrants came here? We can learn in *Truth* that policemen raised funds by gambling; there were scandalous police 'sports nights'; a policeman became bankrupt. *Truth* also educated its readers in Australian history; what they could learn from it was that British-born convicts were cannibals. Apart from sporting news that is about all a foreign reader could learn from *Truth* about Australia and its people. It was a picture, not of Australia Felix, but of Australia Horrible.

*Truth* began to specialize in attacks on European migrants. It started before the migrants arrived. On 5 May, 1946, *Truth* informed readers about the great excitement of patriots and ex-servicemen in South Australia. These people felt offended to the depths of their hearts, because the ABC had engaged the Italian pianist Volterra for a concert. The concert of Volterra was cancelled. Afterwards it became known that Volterra had left Italy because of his disagreement with fascism, had come to Australia, married an Australian woman, and was a citizen of this country.

On 8 December, 1946, *Truth* published the letter of a distressed Australian who amongst other things wrote:

If migrants are getting first priority as I have been told, for housing, while Australian women and children have to suffer, it is a scandalous situation. Wake up Australia!

'CHATHAM'

An editor whose intention was not to stimulate hatred against migrants would have picked up the telephone and asked the authorities whether it was their policy to give immigrants priority in housing; and he would have learned that the suggestion was nonsense. He would have then either not published the letter, or published it with the official reply.

*Truth* recently became *The Sunday Mirror*, on 21 June, 1959. *The Sunday Mirror* published on the front page a picture of the Royal family, and under the picture a huge headline: FOREIGN THREAT. Who constituted this foreign threat? According to *The Sunday Mirror*, the 132,388 registered aliens in NSW—in short the European migrants called New Australians. And why had they become a foreign threat to Australia?

There is an Australian citizen of Polish origin, G. Bielski by name. He is married to an Australian woman. For years he was an official of the AWU, in which New Australians form about twenty-five per cent of the total membership without having a single representative in the union management. G. Bielski had a disagreement with his union bosses, quitted their employ, and formed a New Citizens Council which he registered as a trade union. This organization is the reason why *The Sunday Mirror* declared New Australians to be a foreign threat to Australia and stated: 'The organization is un-Australian and should be disbanded.'

The right of free association is a basic right in any democratic country. But *The Sunday Mirror* does not think that New Australians should have such a right. One week later, it declared that it 'repeats without apology, its condemnation' and in a litany of rebukes to New Australians it accused them of the grave offence of 'speaking foreign languages in public'.

These foreign languages are the mother tongues of European migrants. They are all learning English in their own interest, but many of them never will succeed. Not everybody has the ability to learn a foreign language. The forefather of the present English Royal family, George I, never succeeded in learning English properly and till the end of his life spoke in public a foreign language—German—which was his mother tongue.

Now let us see what else New Australians have done in their new country besides committing the crimes of forming their own organization and speaking foreign languages in public.

On 13 July, 1959, *The Sydney Morning Herald* brought out an instructive survey called *Australia Unlimited*. This supplement was not written by people who make their living by such sensational discoveries as that a wife has deserted her husband 'leaving

him only a toothbrush'. Some of the best brains of the country contributed to it.

The Federal Treasurer, Mr Harold Holt, declared: 'The coming of new settlers has speeded development here, making opportunities for new investment.' That is what he said, and the facts bear him out. The base of a country's industrial development and of its defence is steel production. In the decade 1948-58 ingot steel output in Australia rose from 1.2 to 3.2 million tons, an increase of one hundred and sixty seven per cent. It is an enormous achievement in which Port Kembla played the biggest part. The Port Kembla steel works are today the most modern in the world. Its production has risen from less than half a million tons in 1947 to seventeen hundred and fifty million tons in 1957, an increase of two hundred and sixty eight per cent. If something like that happened in the Soviet Union, delegations organized by Australian Communists would travel there to see the miracle. Who worked on this miracle in Port Kembla? Out of 16,409 people working there, forty four per cent are New Australians. Without them the present development of Port Kembla would be impossible. Electricity output increased in the same period from 9,048 million kilowatts to 21,334 million kilowatts, i.e. by one hundred and thirty six per cent. Who worked on the great hydro-power plants? No official data is available but in our estimation forty per cent, if not more, were New Australians.

Production in the motor industry increased by one hundred and thirty two per cent from 103,200 to 240,000 vehicles. And again among its workers no less than forty per cent are New Australians. They made possible the present development of Mt Isa; they are an important factor in the Australian building industry. They have nothing to be ashamed of in Australia.

Let us confront with facts the arguments of some Australian trade union leaders, who while taking fees from New Australian members never take the trouble to provide interpreters for migrants who still do not speak English. These union leaders maintain that migrants are the reason for the housing shortage.

The population of Australia increased in the decade under observation by twenty eight per cent, from 7,910,000 to 10,150,000. Housing provision increased in the same time by forty eight per cent from 51,340 houses completed in 1948 to 76,000 houses completed in 1958. Although there is still a shortage of houses in Australia, it is not as bad as it was before European migrants arrived here. All New Australians have to pay in taxes for the houses built by such instrumentalities as the NSW

Housing Commission. No New Australian ever gets a house from this Commission, and as a matter of fact they do not expect it, realizing the natural priority of the Australian-born. New Australians, having the pioneering spirit of the forefathers of the present Australians, have saved money and built their houses without any public assistance. In doing this, they have increased the output of the building-materials industry, and provided more employment for people.

Another manifestation of ignorance or propaganda is in blaming New Australians for unemployment in Australia. Unemployment in this country is the lowest in the world with the exception of Communist countries, where any unemployed and many employed persons are deployed in slave-labour camps.

In the present relation between New and Old Australians, the New Australian organizations and press are not without blame. They react to each attack against them with an impulse to close their national community against hostile Australians. This is entirely wrong. Australians generally are good natured people, who, like other national communities, keep in their subconsciousness many prejudices from the past.

The attitude of any community of men towards men of another community depends on the attitude of its leaders. In the First World War the German C-in-C, General Ludendorff, at the time when the German Army advanced into Russia, signed a manifesto addressed to 'My dear Jews' and the German people considered Jews their friends. In the Second World War Hitler declared Jews an enemy who must be killed and the German people killed Jews.

The Australian people are not responsible for any hostile acts against New Australians. The responsibility lies with the ruthless demagogues, scoundrels who make patriotism their personal business, and Australian political and church leaders who are silent, whether they agree or disagree with the ruthless demagogues.

To form a New Australian trade union is not the right answer. In fact this merely plays into the hands of the chauvinists. The real answer is quite different. All New Australian organizations and their press should form a joint committee, which would collect all propaganda material directed against them, and present it to Australian political and religious leaders, and ask for their public opinion on it.

Only if these leaders refused to express their opinion publicly—which is most improbable—would it be time to have recourse to other forms of publicity.

*V.L.Borin*

## LONG AGO SUMMER

*Hugh Atkinson*

REMEMBERING that place and the boyhood there, the years run together the way the days run together, not remembered separately like beads on a necklace but remembered as one continuum of time, an entity of years the way a necklace is an entity of beads. Winter is dark mornings and the warm, tumbled security of bed, the quick dash to dress and the brilliant beard of frost that capped the coal heap, at the bottom of the yard where the tall dark pine trees grew, dropping their needles on the prison cell where we were sometimes allowed to play, or more exciting, where we sometimes peeped when father had locked a prisoner there.

But all the rest is summer, thick and hot and lazy, the cicadas screeching and the white dust rising in the schoolyard and red, peeling noses under bragging straw hats, the brims curled cowboy fashion and the long tramps on holidays to the big dam outside town, flicking each other with towels and chasing lizards, hurrying to change finally in the shelters the coal-miners had built, back from the dam amongst the dusty gum trees, working in their spare time to get the shelters done and the diving board done and the pontoons anchored on cables for the swimming club the mine manager had started. The summers run together with peaches on the trees and the marble season coming in and winter-softened fingernails cracked pink from firing the connies and glassies and knees red-raw from kneeling.

The years and the summers run together in faint and pleasant memory like a story you have read, only one summer sticks out, staying there somewhere in your mind in rocky isolation while the boy grows up; staying there afterwards, forgotten perhaps, but not going anywhere, laying in the mind the way an old letter lies in the bottom of a trunk to get read wonderingly one day and it's only then that you see the meaning in it and understand what it was about.

And then you remember it like two summers, one over the other like a tracing, the summer the boy remembered to stay in the mind of the man and this other one, the thing you learned afterwards by chance, hearing it from a rheumy old man's mouth, seeing it spoken over his rotting teeth stumps, the other summer that goes over the top of the first one, explaining it like a puzzle.

They were hard men in that town. They were hard in their bodies and hard in their minds and there was not enough work to go round. Before the birds woke they stirred in their cottages, the women work-worn and lumpy, unlovely in broken slippers and broken hopes probably, holding the youngest ones on their hips and boiling the flame-blackened kettles for the man's breakfast, cutting the thick bread slices for crib, jam and bacon sandwiches with a boiled egg perhaps or cold boiled potatoes, only to eat themselves much later when the older children had woken and the man had gone, pedalling off in the dark on his bicycle in his stiff black pit clothes or walking, taking some hilly shortcut to the mine, the dark morning warm and rough and loud with the voices of his mates and the ring of their iron-shod pit boots. They were hard men and they drank hard, too, some of them, and they fought hard when they had to and as often as not when they didn't have to only you can't say about that because perhaps it was the bosses they were fighting or the dread monotony of work or the long heart-breaking struggle of making ends meet or the haunt of being laid-off that they fought when they stood behind the pub, the ring around them, or in the dungy backyard of Cosgrove's produce store where the Co-op kept its delivery carts and horses and the men fought silently and viciously until the cut faces ran with blood and the bruised flesh bloomed in purple flowers. There would be someone at the door then, generally a woman, although sometimes a boy was sent with a message and if father was in the house mother would beckon him and speak to him privately while we strained our ears to listen, knowing the men were fighting, our hearts thumping with excitement, waiting for the chance to be off and get a look even if it meant the hard climb up the pepper tree near Cosgrove's and the leap onto the roof where the men couldn't see us, eight and ten and twenty boys up there, broiling on the sun-struck iron roofing, peeking over the guttering with bulging eyes at the heart-stopping scene below. And then my father in his rough, warm policeman's serge that I can still remember with my cheek from being carried against it when I was small, walking still and thick and silent in the yard, not hurrying, showing nothing on his strong brown face only that hint of sadness that worried me then and worries me now. Up on the roof there would be a hissed intake of breath and me hardly daring breathe at all and quick, stolen looks from the boys next to me and a whispered, 'It's your dad!' As though I'd gone blind and couldn't see him. The ring would break up, the men moving to let my father through, watching him with slitted eyes, not frightened of him

or the law, watching to see how he handled himself, watching to see what the men fighting would do. My father would look at them as they backed up, only pretending now to be continuing the fight, waiting the way the other men waited to see how he would handle himself and keeping up the decent and necessary pretence of defiance. My father would say: 'You've had enough by the look of you, you're both good men. Shake hands now and get yourself home.' Or if he could see that there was still too much anger in them he would sometimes take off his cap and take out the heavy gold watch that had been Grandfather's and say: 'You two have been spoiling for a fight and I'm not going to stop you. But you'll fight decently. Two minute rounds and I'm the referee.' There would be the quick release of laughter then in the ring of watching men, a sudden noisy shuffling of feet and voices calling, 'Good on yer, Sarge'. My father would put down his cap and take out his baton, not joking but deadly serious. He would hold up the remorseless, polished monolith of wood while we caught our breaths on the roof and tell the men: 'You'll do as I say. The referee's decision is final and I'll use this to settle any argument.' Then there would be a great shout of laughter and the men fighting would kick their toes in the ground and screw up their cut and bloody faces and shrug their shoulders while father instructed them in the rules the fight was to go by.

Only sometimes it wouldn't be like that. Sometimes it wasn't good enough for the men to have out their fight with each other. Sometimes it was father who had to do the fighting.

That summer, the one that doesn't run together like the others, the one that stayed behind lodged in the mind like a grass seed in a shoe which you only feel occasionally, that summer father didn't and wouldn't fight and the whole town knew about it and the boys knew about it too and that was the worst part although a few of the townsmen knew why and understood his reason and it was one of them, an old man now that told the truth at last.

They were hard men and the life was hard, digging the coal that gleamed like black diamonds inside the guts of those hills. They went down the dark, round mine mouth while the sky was still dark around them, walking two and three miles to some of the galleries after they had entered the mine, the carbide lamps flaring in their caps and the walls monstrous with their leaping shadows. They toiled at the coal face with the pick and the shovel, shoring up the roof with pit props, firing the charges in acrid, choking dust, their bodies running black, their skins pitted black, their lungs spummy and black where other lungs are pink,

their heavy, clotted spittle dark as tar. They dug the 'darg', the measure or norm, the weight of coal expected of them and when the going was hard and the seam was lean they only came out of the mine's night into that other night-time and between coming and going they never saw the day.

They were hard men and they drank hard and fought hard and the hardest of them all was Black Danny Gaha, six feet tall of Irishman, as terrible as an army when the drink was on him. Black Danny Gaha who said he couldn't abide the sight of a policeman sober and wouldn't abide it drunk, who had fought three times with my father, coming to the police station once to get him, bellowing outside and throwing stones on the roof of the house while mother sat sobbing in her chair and my father took the handcuffs and the baton and the pistol out of his pockets and locked them next door in the office and hung his cap in the hall and comforted mother before he walked out to Black Danny.

There was something between Black Danny and my father even then because he would never use the baton on him the way he had on the Gates brothers when they came to town to fight him and got locked up in the cell at last and Doctor Scrivener in his old Austin had come to patch up their heads. They were hard and there wasn't much law in them and Black Danny was the hero and with only one policeman in that town and in that district I think my father knew that while he licked Danny he needn't trouble himself about having to lick the others. But that summer my father didn't and wouldn't fight and the first time it happened I couldn't believe it because I was there at the time, had known about it all afternoon and couldn't think in the schoolroom waiting for the bell to go and neither could the other boys because we had all known since lunchtime that Black Danny Gaha was drinking in the Railway Hotel and was shouting that when he got good and ready my father had better look out. I was there because as soon as we got out of school we ran down and waited in the park near the hotel which wasn't a park really, but a paddock with a cricket pitch in it and an old grandstand and we were safe there pretending to play.

When Black Danny came out he just stood there on the pavement, the other men smoking and keeping their distance and then he shouted: 'I'm fair sick of the sight of yers, all of yers. For two pins I'd smash yer bliddy faces in,' and then he turned and walked up the footpath into the main street, shouting: 'Bring on that bliddy sergeant,' and banging his fists together and flexing his muscles. The whole town was out by then, the men squatting on the corners rolling cigarettes or leaning on the

verandah posts although there weren't any women to be seen. And then we saw father on the other side of the street, talking to a man on a horse. Danny Gaha saw him too and shouted: 'There it is with its cap on, the dirty policeman that it is.' My father said something and the man walked his horse away, turned in the saddle watching. Mick Hoy came out from his billiard saloon, his fat belly hanging over his trousers, the pipe in his mouth. 'Clear out you kids, go on, get home now or I'll kick yer tails in,' but we didn't move far and Mick Hoy lost interest watching my father.

A boy whispered: 'Don't worry, your dad will lick him.' And then father began to cross the street while Danny Gaha waited for him. That was before the main street was concreted and it was a hot, dry summer. I remember the dust rising in front of his boots, white against the blue of his uniform. Danny Gaha began to move about, putting out one foot and then the other, his fists up already.

'I'm waitin' for yer,' he shouted, 'Oh yes, I'm waitin' for yer. Do you see that now?' pointing to a scar on his eye. 'Well I owe yer for that from the last time.'

My father stopped a good distance away.

'You're drunk, Danny.'

'Am I now,' Black Danny said, 'I'm drunk is it? Well, I'm not so drunk I won't smash you this day.'

And then my father: 'It was a month in the big jail last time Danny. You don't want to go back there again.'

'And who put me there?' Danny shouted, dancing about again, 'Isn't that something else that I owe you for?'

'You can't afford to be locked up now, Danny,' my father said, 'Aren't you forgetting something?'

'Me time's me own,' Black Danny said. 'Now are you goin' to start fightin' or aren't yer?'

'Go on home, Danny,' my father said and then he turned his back on Danny and walked away with his heavy, even policeman's tread.

'He's backed down for God's sake,' a grown-up said, 'The bloody Sergeant's had enough of Black Danny.'

The town began to stir again, very slowly, moving away from Black Danny and me. The other boys went slowly up the footpath, looking at me over their shoulders, staring at me wonderingly from under their jaunty straw hats. I didn't know what was happening. I felt sick and needed my mother, needed the house and my own room to shut myself in. Danny Gaha seemed stunned for a little while too and then he bent, searching

around him in the dust of the street. He found what he wanted and his arm came back. 'Go on, run, yer dirty copper,' he shouted and the stone whizzed past my father's plodding back and sent up a spurt of dust where it hit.

That's the way of it. It didn't take long to happen, a few minutes perhaps, but it took the joy out of that summer the way you core an apple with your knife. And when it was done it wasn't over either because in one way it never stopped happening all that summer and for me I can see now that it never got done, not that summer or any other, not in the growing up or in the burying of my father and not in anything that happened afterwards until the old man who had been there told me about it, the old man who had worked in the mine with Danny Gaha and Danny's mate Bob Banning, slopping his beer on his chin and remembering the old days, the glass clawed in humped and broken knuckles, his old body bent and shriven inside his flannel singlet.

I couldn't remember Bob Banning although I seemed to remember a boy named Banning in the school, but he was probably interchangeable with any of the miners I could remember. Bob Banning would have been a hard man no better or worse than the rest and the thing that happened to him happened to enough of the others. Bob Banning got the dust or 'got dusted' as the miners say.

Working there at the coal face paired with Danny Gaha, the black crystals he breathed and swallowed in the dust-hung darkness of the mine, crystals as sharp as powdered glass and if you crush a lump of coal up fine you'll see them clearly enough, the coal dust ate the linings off his lungs, rotted the lung flesh, filled his throat with spittle, wheezed and choked the wind in his chest and Bob Banning started to die.

But there are worse things than dying anywhere you find men living hard and one of them is not dying, having to keep on living with a family to feed and rent to pay and the beer-hunger and the tobacco-hunger on you and no money in the house and no prospect of money and no strength in you to lift a pick and no breath in you to use it.

And that's the other summer that goes over the first one like a tracing. Bob Banning, one of the miners in those hills and Black Danny Gaha's mate, with a year to go until he got the pension and no pension if he didn't finish the year or died or got too sick to work. Sixteen skips was the darg the men cut in that mine and less wouldn't do with other men waiting for a job. Sixteen skips of coal, cut and credited, marked against your

name and fourteen wouldn't do and fifteen wouldn't do either. Sixteen skips, every working day and a man had to be a good man to keep up with it.

But Bob Banning, Danny Gaha's mate, had got the dust in his lungs. Not for one summer but for three summers, three livelong years as the old man told it to me later, Bob Banning couldn't dig out his darg. He would have tried hard enough, choking and coughing up the lining of his life there at the evil black coal face with Danny Gaha digging and sweating alongside of him. But it got to be fifteen, then fourteen then twelve skips was all he could manage.

And finally, that last summer, the summer before the pension, ten skips, and eight skips and six skips. Outside the mine in the sunshine where the air was good to breathe and you could see the water shining in the big dam where we swam and caught the carp and crayfish, with a billy to carry them home, the weighing boss with his papers and pencil checked the skips as they rumbled out of the mine mouth on the shining steel rails stuck like bones in its mouth and he wrote down the credits for the men a mile down in the mountain. Every day, like clockwork, between starting and knocking off, thirty-two skips came up from Danny's gallery and the weighing boss wrote down the dargs, sixteen skips for Danny Gaha and sixteen skips for Bob Banning.

My father got thin and drawn that summer and his easy friendship with the people of the town was over. He didn't stop to yarn with the men smoking cigarettes on the sweet-smelling chaff bags in the long, cool shadows of Cosgrove's produce store. It was different in the house, too, between father and me and it was worse in the school and I fought a lot of fights that summer up the back near the tennis court when the school day was over.

My father got thin and drawn and solitary but it was worse for Danny Gaha. That last summer he looked as though it were he who had got the dust with his eyes red as blood and the weight gone off him and his straight back not the way it had been but bent over now as though his stomach was hurting. The men kept away from Danny and when he went to the hotel he drank on his own and when he was drinking the men kept a lot of bar between themselves and Danny because it had got so that Danny Gaha would turn without a word and stretch a man senseless for blinking.

And all that summer he tried to fight my father, calling insults at him in the main street where all the townspeople could hear and the boys and the school teachers heard it too

and every time my father turned and slowly walked away, the hot serge broad and blue on his back, his boots slowly marching the dust. During that time it was said that some of the business people had got together and discussed writing to the Superintendent to get my father transferred and my mother heard about it and it was bad in the house for a long time and my father hardly spoke at all.

At the end of the summer, the grass brown, in the time of the last cicadas, my father walked up to Black Danny in the street on a Saturday afternoon when the pictures were going in and us in our good clothes and washed clean with the sixpences in our hands and Danny too drunk to walk straight.

My father said with the townspeople listening:

'I hear you've got a new mate at the mine, Black Danny Gaha.'

Danny fetched up, watching him.

'And what is it to you if me old mate's retired and a pension coming in once a fortnight?'

My father seemed to get bigger then the way he had used to be and the lines went out of his face and he smiled for the first time in a long while and looked up and down the street and into the eyes of the townspeople as though he were seeing it all after years of being away.

'You're drunk, Danny,' my father said.

'Drunk is it.' Danny said, 'And what might that be to you?'

'I'm locking you up, Danny,' my father said, 'and I don't need my baton to do it.'

Danny watched him for a long time, his eyes slitted and then he said: 'You knew, didn't you? I had it in me head that you knew.'

My father said: 'Yes, I knew, Danny.'

Danny said: 'Well, I did it! But I bliddy near busted me boiler.' And then Black Danny and my father were laughing together and everyone staring at them with their eyes popping out and then the two of them walked away to the police station, the two biggest men in that town, and afterwards with Danny locked up in the cell my father took two glasses and a bottle of whisky and locked himself in the cell with Danny because I saw him, running home the other way to find out what was happening and then walking back afterwards, thinking, and being late for the pictures.

*Hugh Atkinson*



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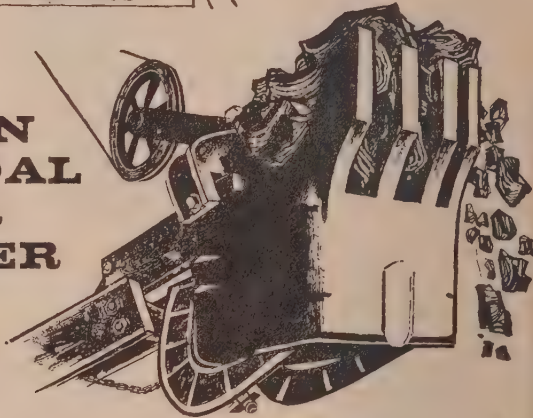
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## ON BEING AN INTELLECTUAL

*James McAuley*

‘WHY WRITE, if this too easy activity of pushing a pen across paper is not given a certain bull-fighting risk and we do not approach dangerous, agile, and two-horned subjects?’ Thus Ortega y Gasset parenthesizes in approaching a ‘subtle, delicate and compromising subject’ in his book *On Love*. I have long meditated another ‘subtle, delicate and compromising subject’: the nature and role of the intellectuals—a ‘two-horned’ topic because of the ambiguity of the concept of the intellectual and because of the dilemmas one can be impaled upon. No-one who tries to tell the truth on this subject can expect to pass unscathed; for he is touching a class of persons who combine interior conflicts and self-reproach with an astonishing measure of complacent arrogance and skill in gang-warfare if subjected to criticism—one of the ways in which they resemble a priesthood.

It is frequently remarked that to be an intellectual is something other than being a man of intelligence; intellectuals sometimes are and sometimes are not men of intelligence—they do not necessarily possess a quick shrewd judgment in affairs or a freely-moving unprejudiced mind, they are not always particularly *bright*.

An intellectual is also not the same thing as a professional engaged in one of the brain-trades: many an eminent lawyer or scientist or scholar hardly qualifies as an intellectual nor would wish to be called one; and some intellectuals are not men of a learned profession.

What, then, is the specific character of the intellectual? It is that of a person interested in the more general or philosophical aspects of problems: one who takes seriously the fundamental questions, the basic principles of different world-views. This, in a purely descriptive sense, is what distinguishes the intellectual, whether we use the word in an honourable or a pejorative sense.

In the most honourable sense, the intellectual is he whose delight it is to *know*. He works not just for useful results but so that at the end of his six days’ labour he shall reach the Sabbath of the mind in which the truth is contemplated. This is that ‘Archimedean point’ which Jakob Burckhardt longed for in his *Reflections on History*: to contemplate the truth—in his case, historical truth—not as a partisan, or as enslaved by passions

and fears, but in a free and disinterested way. 'Any man,' he said, 'with an inkling of what that meant would completely forget fortune and misfortune, and would spend his life in the quest of that wisdom.'

But clearly this tradition of contemplation as the noblest activity of man was already losing its hold in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when 'the intellectuals' first clearly emerged as a specifically modern social phenomenon. The spirit and modes of operation of this modern type cannot be described simply in terms of a vocation to disinterested inquiry.

One of the most interesting examples is the rise of the Russian intelligentsia after the Petrine reforms. By the middle of the nineteenth century it had become a definite caste, which, because of the peculiar Russian conditions, was alienated from the rest of society in an extreme degree. This caste was the bearer of a messianic mission. It took over from the Russian State the notion of public service as man's highest aim; and it took over from the Russian Church the notion of the Christian people as a mystical body whose salvation was the purpose of the whole cosmic drama. But these notions were translated into new terms: public service to 'the people', in defiance of Tsar and God, and their redemption through enlightenment and progress—this was the secular mystique animating the order of intellectuals. Victor Frank has summed this up very justly:<sup>1</sup>

It is easy to laugh at all this. But with all its faults, with all its political naiveté, with all its silliness, the pre-revolutionary Russian intelligentsia was one of the most humane, one of the morally purest heresies of our times. In a one-sided and neurotic sort of way it was the conscience of its nation. Though mostly agnostic or atheistic, it had all the faults and virtues of a militant monastic order. . . . When the great trials came, many of its members were to win a martyr's crown.

Under the different social conditions of Western Europe, these messianic tendencies and this quasi-religious devotion to 'the people', although present, never reached such extreme development. The intellectuals were not so drastically alienated from the rest of society: they could frequently gain respect and dignity as professional men, access to the bureaucracy was not denied them, the academies were less hostile, and their political activity was not necessarily conspiratorial. Nevertheless, there is enough in common for the Russian example, through its very exaggerations, to light up features of our Western experience. After all, the Russian development was an imitation of what had happened in Europe.

<sup>1</sup> 'The Russian Radical Tradition,' *Soviet Survey*, July-September, 1959.

For the modern intellectuals have everywhere been to some extent an alienated class, 'displaced persons' not at home in the social order. Social and personal insecurity and anxiety seem to play a large part. What they have been chiefly interested in is the idea of social transformation. They are for the most part the children of the Enlightenment, the bearers of the modern ideologies, sectaries of the Religion of Progress, a priesthood of dissent—but the dissent is rooted in a secular dogmatism. Agnostic, sceptical and 'uncommitted' phases mingle with and change over into militant and dogmatic ones. A great number of the Australian university intellectuals who gravitated to Communism did so by an interesting path: positivism had laid waste all possible assumptions and beliefs, leaving a void in which they felt the need, not so much of Marxist philosophy, as of *redemptive action upon society in the name of Progress*. It was this new principle and finality that they sought; but they could not have found it if the Party had not been there with its core of dogma and its coherent purposiveness in the light of that dogma. This was the *prestige* of the Party which bewitched them. Those who did not make this transition floated around as a fellow-traveller, or a philosophical anarchist (as, at a certain stage, I described myself). But what controlled the whole field was the question of a secular gnosis: to that we were all oriented; our free critical activities were really dance-routines to the tunes of ideological pipers. The fact that many of us danced in diverse incoherent snatches instead of performing to the strict choreography of Stalin is not decisive. The eccentrics, the dissenters even from the orthodoxy of dissent, might re-explore Nietzsche, or Stirner, or Sorel, or the anarchism lighted up by the Spanish Civil War (as I did—along with exploring the literary esoterisms of Blake, Mallarmé, Rilke, George and so on). Never mind, we were all 'enlightened'; we all belonged somehow to the order of illuminati. Even our confessions of not-knowing and uncertainty were somehow superior to the mere ignorance and confusion of those who were not intellectuals.

This brings into view one of the ambiguities which interests me to the point of fascination. 'Liberal intellectuals' present two appearances, both true. They seem to be much given to scepticism and indecisiveness; they have undermined certainty in knowledge, and generated a distrust of the very instrument of knowledge, the intellect; they have relativized all values, denied the rationality of all ends of action; they oppose all conformism and cling to sovereign individualism. Yet they also appear to be dogmatists, arrogant with esoteric certainties, and

full of party spirit for causes whose rightness one cannot question without becoming a traitor to humanity and progress.

When Hume philosophized himself into an abyss of scepticism he said to himself that one must nevertheless live as a sensible man of the world. When the modern liberal intellectual has philosophized himself into a void he frequently finds that one must nevertheless cut a figure as a 'progressive': the structure of ideological compulsion remains curiously intact as a canon of respectability while everything else is destroyed. One must act 'as if' its tenets were true, its aims rational. The mind is a blank sheet; but hold it to the light and the watermark shows: it is the guild-sign of Progressivism. Hold it to the fire, and the secret instructions appear, for the invisible writing has not been expunged.

This type of liberal intellectual has abounded so much in our time as to have become the standard type one expects to encounter; it has appropriated the terms 'liberal' and 'intellectual' almost exclusively to itself, so that others are unwilling to claim either label. Yet the liberalism is questionable when one considers the disquieting lack of resistance to totalitarianism; and the intellectuality is also open to serious challenge. It is as if the mind were under a spell, disconnected from reality and swayed by certain psychological mechanisms along certain pre-ordained paths, which could easily be suicidal.

In a society in which tension and anxiety seem to be exacting an increasing toll in mental illness, even while material welfare and public education (those supposed cures of all social ills) are also increasing, one would expect the intellectuals, as an exposed group, to be particularly liable to neurotic reactions. The group attracts to itself a large number of the personally maladjusted. Elton Mayo remarked on this in relation to students:<sup>2</sup>

Certain subjects seem to possess a fatal attraction for those unhappy individuals—philosophy, literature, sociology, law, economics, and—God save us all—government. . . . Argument, however rational, that is unrelated to a developing point of contact with the external world remains—however logical—a confusion of indeterminate possibilities. Some of these persons—able, unhappy, rebellious—rank as scholars.

The fact is that a great number of intellectuals are engaged in a predominantly emotional activity, even though it is ideas that are manipulated in the process. There are several common psychological mechanisms involved. (How does one know this? Not just by olympian observation: these are things one knows first in oneself and recognizes in others).

<sup>2</sup> *The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization*, 1949, p. 22.

Firstly, there is the substitution of fashion-thinking for reality-thinking. The intellectual too often graduates to acceptance in the group by donning the current uniform of opinions without having strictly earned the right to those opinions by a genuine consideration of the problem and the contending views. He knows which are the O.K. books and the O.K. propositions; and for him to subject his mind to the impact of unfashionable views requires a degree of toughness and resolution which most of us develop only slowly, if at all. The verbal rituals that intellectual groups develop are full of devices for rendering opposing views socially 'impossible'. How many of us who in the thirties discovered we were 'socialists' ever acquired this label by due process of intellectual inquiry? Everyone 'knew' that 'capitalism' was out and 'socialism' in. The sudden bursting of the socialist bubble after the British fiasco and the triumph of liberal economics in Europe merely showed how little realistic inquiry had ever gone into this immense delusion.

Connected with this tyranny of fashion is the compulsively oppositional character of many groups, who are committed, not accidentally, but essentially, to saying 'No' and '*ohne mich*' to the constitutive propositions of the community. It is not a fact that the dissenting minority always happens to be right. A good deal of the shine has worn off the sex freedom and new education of the twenties, the popular-fronting and pacifism of the thirties, the pro-Stalinism and socialism of the forties. The oppositional drive is not a matter of superior wisdom but an emotional *need*. To be against whatever is 'conventional' or 'reactionary' or 'conformist' is a reassuring guarantee that one is intellectually respectable—which only illustrates the great strength of the pressure to conformism that operates within the minority group.

One of the most potent and obscure mechanisms is the guilt mechanism. One can distinguish between a sensitive but healthy and realistic conscience and a neurotic scrupulosity, or anxiety-guilt not adjusted to reality. The effect of the latter is to paralyse the normal and necessary defence of important values. Because Australian aborigines suffer legal and social discrimination and sometimes injustice, we shall concentrate wholly on protest and breast-beating on this score and resign our right to oppose Communist slave-labour and genocide. Because of the abuses that occurred under imperialism and capitalism we must say there is an equal plague on both houses rendering us unfit to oppose totalitarianism. The Communists regard the manipulation of this guilt-mechanism of the Western intellectuals as the

primary weapon in the psychological warfare they direct against this group. The immediate answer of the Communists in Australia to the Hungarian scandal was predictable: they launched a full-blast campaign on aboriginal wrongs in Western Australia. The longer-range programme has been to nullify and bury the Hungarian massacre by concentrating on the guilt and anxiety feelings aroused by colonial problems, race relations in general, and above all nuclear armaments. How successful they have been may be measured by the number of persons who, three years after Hungary, and in the year of Tibet, can be made to confuse peace with the Communist political-warfare term with the same spelling.

At least one other mechanism should be mentioned: perfectionist demands as an excuse for not doing anything worthwhile. False or inappropriate or impossible goals are set up, not as real and attainable objectives, but as a reason for being absent from the good work that can be done. Charitable work, for instance, is bourgeois sentimentality: what is needed is nothing less than a complete reconstitution of society so that charity will be unnecessary, and we must not be diverted from this great aim into actually doing something for someone. H-bomb hysteria frequently exhibits this mechanism. Unilateral disarmament by ourselves is made the exclusive aim, not because there is any chance of this happening, *but precisely because there is no chance*; one is then absolved in a state of superior righteousness from all realistic consideration of the problems.

Common to all these non-rational 'interferences', which convert what is supposed to be an intellectual life into an emotional ritual, is something very disturbing: an impaired reality-sense, and a compulsive drive either to absent oneself from the defence of civilization or actually to attack the essential values involved in that defence. This is the *trahison des clercs*, mid-twentieth century style, and it requires further analysis.

The fact that there are honourable exceptions is no excuse for turning away from the critical problem: why has the record of the liberal intellectuals been so unsatisfactory when there was need of the defence of civilization against totalitarianism?

At least, it is felt, the record is good against Hitler. But is it? Let us not argue now about the strange contradictions of the 'anti-fascism' of the thirties, clamouring for disarmament, and showing its democratic bona fides by accepting '*la main tendue*' of Communist totalitarianism. Look at the record in Germany itself. Erich Meissner raised the painful question:<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *Confusion of Faces*, 1946, p. 43.

## ON BEING AN INTELLECTUAL

The alarming aspect of our present situation is that the power of resistance and defiance seems to be steadily weakening. There are no indisputable lines of defence. . . . The popular instinct is quite right when it concentrates on the question: Why was Hitler insufficiently resisted?

This is, indeed, the crucial problem, but it is in its wider aspects a European problem. Why was there that astounding impotence in the German academic world? Why did the Universities, the centres of learning and culture, collapse and surrender to the invading enemy at the time when unknown parsons, deserted by the Church authorities, began to rally their congregations and put up resistance? The answer is: Humanism, culture, and refinement, all the achievements of modern secularism which were at hand, provided neither courage nor inspiration—the Sword of the Stoics was not in the hands of the intellectual leaders. In the hour of danger it was the much despised Church and not the University where the spirit of man found refuge.

A good deal could be said about the 'liberal' erosion of values which made the breakthrough of Nazism in Germany possible and a judgment on Europe as a whole. But let us turn to the case of Communism, where the liberal intellectuals know that their record is far worse. Why this sorry complicity and connivance between self-proclaimed liberals and the Communist perpetrators of every crime against humanity?

Large parts of the heritage of liberal-progressive Enlightenment are also shared by the Communists. The difference is that the Communists really mean it, are more logical, consequential and determined. They are prepared to use brutal and unscrupulous means from which the liberals shrink, though liberal moral scepticism makes it difficult to justify this shrinking as anything more than squeamishness. Hence the Communists despise the liberals as people who like to play with progressive 'ideals' but are too cowardly to will the means to attain them. But the Communists also realize that this common stock of 'modern' and 'progressive' ideas gives them a vast field in which their propaganda can resonate if skilfully used, and a great deal of conscious and half-conscious following-travelling can be encouraged. When Stalin rang the bell, half or more of the Western liberal democratic intellectuals salivated.

What are the strands in the heritage of modern enlightenment which entangled the main body of liberal intellectuals so strangely with the movement that would pitilessly destroy them? What is the ideological source of that tenacity of delusion about Communist reality which even now persists and re-asserts itself, though with subtler rationalizations and precautions?

Liberalism arose as an historical movement, militantly and dogmatically committed to 'humanism', that is, to the view of man as an autonomous being, a sovereign mind and will, not a

creature of God. The reverence, devotion, lordship, privileges and power of which Humanity has deprived itself in order to project them upon God must now be recalled to Humanity. This was already present in deism and pantheism: it was stated in the boldest terms in that atheist humanism which Marx regarded as the first principle of Communism. The fundamental word is the serpent's ideology: 'you shall be as gods'. Man shall decide, shall rule, shall reveal, shall determine the categories of good and evil—not God, whether He be dead or alive. Not Christus Pantocrator, who shall divinize men by incorporation with Himself: but Humanitas Pantocrator, who shall divinize all the human units by incorporation in the perfected collectivity on earth.

Hence the decisive option is for secularism. Within this secularist cosmos an enlightened élite will form the vanguard of progress, perfecting man and society by a combination of physical science and industry with the new science invented for the purpose, namely, 'social science', whose application will be 'social engineering'. A rational scheme of society can now be framed by the enlightened élite and organized kindly by democratic processes (liberalism) or with surgical severity (Communism).

In any case, the traditional values and the traditional order of Western civilization have to be liquidated. Man's end lies within this world not in eternity. Man has no created nature with an objective moral law. Man will make and re-make his nature, and assign laws to it at will. Objective morality is replaced by some kind of relativism. We are effectively 'beyond good and evil' as moral absolutes.

Each of the traditional orders constituting European society is marked down for liquidation: the monarchy, the nobility, the clergy, the merchants, the craftsmen, the peasantry. Society will consist of bureaucrats, intellectuals, and proletarian workers.

The orientation is urban-industrial; it favours state control and centralization; 'planning' is preferred to free enterprise. Property, traditionally regarded as a natural right and the basis of civic liberty, is to be voided of the reality of ownership or completely abolished. Egalitarianism, traditionally regarded as destructive of freedom, is the theoretical ideal which is used to undermine the traditional social hierarchy and enlist the support of the masses, even though in the end new privileged élites inevitably emerge. Social utility must prevail: for example, the new education will cease to be intellectually oriented and will be a pragmatist and social-adjustment affair. Women will

also be emancipated from their traditional roles and masculinized in the name of feminism. 'Bourgeois' or 'puritanical' ideals of sexual morality and family life are especially under attack as the stronghold of reaction: marriage is a mere tenancy-at-will, terminable if no longer satisfactory or a better bargain can be made. Children should be liberated from parental authority and brought up institutionally by experts. Finally—for we must end somewhere—history is deified as the bringer of progress, success is treated as justification, what is later is better, and man's business is to ride the 'wave of history'.

No wonder so many liberals felt an uneasy admiration for the Communists, and accepted the Communist claim that they were the vanguard of Progress, a continuation by a resolute and militant force of the line of advance liberalism had already pioneered. 'Forward from liberalism' seemed a logical step, and if many did not take it they felt that they were 'soft', and respected the 'steel-hard' cadres of the Party. One has to take into account also the concealed power-worship of many intellectuals; nor, unfortunately, can one ignore the amount of opportunism, calculation of material advantage, and predisposition to the apparently winning side exhibited by individuals.

The high point of this strange but deep-seated collusion is now past. Salutory experience has cast some cold water on these 'advanced ideas'; and the true face of Communism cannot be completely hidden, even from the keen-sighted critical mind of a liberal intellectual.

The Age of Ideology, 1750-1950 (?), may be almost over, though one cannot be too sure. But the delusional framework of that period still lurks behind our disintegrated, hesitant liberalism that would fain settle for peace, comfort, co-existence and neutralism. In parts of the Western world there are signs of a resurgence of a genuine realist intellectuality, determined to break the delusional grip of a pseudo-rational secular gnosis. But if this reviving realism is to be something more dynamic and creative than a stoic conservatism, eaten at the heart by hopelessness and making a stand merely for honour's sake, it must pass beyond the sphere of natural values. The heart of culture is the divine *cultus*, and until this ceases to be thought of as a private and peripheral irrelevance or intrusion, and becomes central, the new springtime of history will be postponed.

We are to an acute degree in the Deuteronomic situation: a choice has been set before us, of life or death, of a blessing or a curse. We may choose which we will and it will be given us.

*James McAuley*

# TO GET AHEAD, YOU MUST LOOK AHEAD!

How often do we hear the man who feels he has made some little progress in life confide that he is "doing a little coasting", or that he is "marking time"?

What a lamentable piece of self-deception that is! The truth is that nobody, anywhere, can stand still for long. If a man at any time does not positively know he is actively progressing, of this he can be sure — he is slipping back, losing his grip, being overtaken and passed. To get ahead, one must always look ahead, always have a plan, and always keep moving.

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## THE NEW RIGHT IN BRITAIN

A.V.Sherman

THE distinguished guest-speaker, the white Prime Minister of African lands, mopped his brow; he had good reason to. Though the smoking room of the exclusive political club where he was lecturing may not have been very hot, the reception he received was disconcerting enough.

Under fire from the Labour Party and radical opinion generally for his handling of certain colonial questions, he had come to talk to the 'Bow Group', a spearhead of the 'new right' organized by conservative intellectuals in their twenties and early thirties; here at least he might have hoped for moral support. But though the questions and discussions were polite and restrained, they made it quite clear that his appeals to national, group or class feelings would not succeed in taking the edge off their deep concern and sense of responsibility for the human and political rights of British subjects, whatever their colour or cultural level.

A young peer, who had already gained the public eye by uninhibited criticism of the 'Establishment' that few commoners—even socialists—would have dared make, took the speaker to task respectfully, but bluntly; if he is wise, the visitor will take the group's attitude to heart no less seriously than Labour's more outright strictures.

Twenty years ago the 'Bow Group', whose palpable influence on political life symbolizes the changes in post-war Britain which gave rise to the 'new right', would have been inconceivable. In another twenty years its influence over Conservative—and to that extent, national—politics, may well be decisive.

Since its formation eight years ago, the 'Bow Group' (named after a working-class suburb of London where its members first met) has made itself felt. Its founders were young graduates, members or sympathizers of the Conservative Party, who rejected the assumption that radicalism, or concern for social justice and economic welfare, were inseparably linked with socialism, but remained unwilling to leave the party's social thinking and planning solely to a leadership tied down by political and governmental responsibility.

The group's *weltanschauung* has been described as a 'liberal counter-revolution', and epitomizes the new trends in the mental climate here since socialism and communism turned from ideas to regimes. Inasmuch as 'left' and 'right' mean anything, the 'new

right' is well to the left of the Conservative Party in social and colonial affairs, well to the right in economic affairs, and cautiously empirical in foreign policy. It is characterized by concern for re-establishing the scope for personal activity and responsibility in this highly organized society of ours, ensuring that the individual will be an active participant and not a passive object in both economic life and social welfare.

Until a generation ago it was considered almost axiomatic that radically-inclined young intellectuals from the middle and upper-middle classes would find expression for their sense of social protest in socialism—the more radical, the further left they were.

During the thirties and forties the British student community, and wide sectors of the intelligentsia grew to be predominantly left-wing in sentiment. To say that conservatism was on the defensive in the universities would be an understatement; conservatives were considered at best to be people who did not think, and themselves felt that if the left did not actually have a better case at least it knew how to present it better.

Times have changed. Experience of Communist rule in Eastern Europe and Asia, Labour rule in Britain, and vastly increased state power the world over, has rubbed off most of socialism's revolutionary glamour and brought awareness that the over-powerful state menaces individual welfare and rights even more than untrammelled concentrations of wealth had done a century earlier.

Since the early fifties conservatism has once again become fashionable in the universities, where it is now the strongest single political force among undergraduates, and it is socialism's turn to be on the defensive, while the Communists who once exerted powerful influence on the student body in general and on its left-wing in particular, have lapsed into impotence.

Radical thinking has once again begun to find a place for itself inside the Conservative Party, which is no more immune to the laws of social change than any other institution. Just as crushing defeats in the late nineteenth century led the Conservative Party to adopt the new mass-party techniques developed by their liberal rivals, their defeat by Labour in 1945 led the Tories to adopt, and even improve on, institutions and gimmicks which had been developed by Labour over previous decades, including research and publication groups, both centrally controlled and autonomous, along lines originally pioneered by the Fabian Society, which provided Labour's intellectual leadership for decades.

The 'Bow Group' grew up in this climate. Its main activities are directed through study groups on particular problems, whose papers are discussed by the membership, and then published, either as pamphlets or as articles in their lively and provocative quarterly *Crossbow*, which has succeeded in attaining high standards, in attracting many outside writers, by no means all of them Conservatives, but which has managed to temper its seriousness by a sense of humour amounting sometimes to an irreverence which has succeeded in annoying members of the party hierarchy.

The 'new right' attributes considerable importance to further widening educational opportunities, to the benefit of individuals and nation alike, free from the unfortunate ambivalence which often clouds socialist attitudes to education, in which genuine concern for equality of opportunity is frequently combined with some measure of hostility towards talent, intellectual distinction or social mobility as such.

The 'Bow Group' and University Conservative Federation have pressed for further extension and rationalization of university grants, so that every student accepted by an institute of higher education may be assured of the means of support and study. In contrast to the strong current in Labour circles in favour of abolition or 'nationalization' of the 'public schools' (i.e. fee-paying schools) the group has proposed that true democratization of these institutions does not involve breaking them up, since they provide such a valuable training for both intellect and character, but lies in providing government scholarships to ensure that a substantial proportion of places are made available to the best scholars from state schools.

Applying their non-left-wing radicalism to their own party, the 'new right' has pressed for radical reform of its social composition to bring it in line with the times. At present Conservative representation in parliament and local government is heavily biased in favour of the upper middle classes—in particular, army, business, and possessors of private incomes—the higher age groups, males, and exponents of the traditional Tory outlook, known irreverently as 'blimps'. The 'Bow Group' has proposed measures which would ensure a supply of younger candidates, including women, more representative of the nation's social composition, and more in tune with changing ideas.

One of the group's better known members, Lord Altrincham, has led the pressure for reform of the House of Lords long after the Labour Party lost interest in the question. Not content with the adoption of one proposal which he popularized, the creation

of life peers, he is pressing for regulations which will restrict membership to peers chosen or created for their qualities, and exclusion of what he calls 'inherited mediocrity'. He has been lending weight to his demands by ostentatiously refusing to attend the House of Lords until these reforms are carried out, calling on other peers to do likewise.

Summing up experience of the past dozen years or so in the light of economic theory, the group has re-affirmed that a market economy would enable the most effective deployment of national resources. A generation ago such a view would have been widely condemned as reactionary, and even its supporters would have been a little shamefaced about it. Its proponents have gained fresh confidence, however, not only from world economic developments, but also from rediscovery of the virtues of the price mechanism which has been taking place of late in left-wing circles as varied as the British Labour Party, the Yugoslav Communist Party, and the Soviet planning authorities.

Their recommendations include the reorganization of nationalized industries into compact, independent, strictly commercial units capable of emulating the Postal Services (which have been outstandingly successful in recent years) in competitive management; abolition of restrictions which still pervade many sectors of the economy; a determined campaign against restrictive practices by both sides in industry; and relaxation of tariff barriers which afford undue protection to inefficient domestic producers.

As far as possible they have endeavoured to lead discussions on economic controls from the narrower question of income-distribution and day-to-day operation, to the need for long-term economic policy, to which they have contributed a number of studies.

Though it has been estimated that a substantial group of future Conservative MPs and Ministers will come from the ranks of the 'Bow Group' as time goes on, the majority of its five or six hundred members have no desire for a political career, but remain wedded to their professions, with political activity a hobby or duty. Even those who look forward to a political career have their professional or academic status to sustain them financially and socially. This gives them a measure of independence from both their party leadership and public opinion, which has expressed itself in a courageous stand on many issues where both parties have preferred to hedge.

For instance, on the vexed issue of prostitution and homosexuality, and divorce, where the government deferred to

prejudice and hypocrisy, and the Labour Party considered it politically unwise to oppose them, the 'Bow Group' courageously called for reforms.

Though there has long been widespread feeling in Britain that the whole question of trade-unionism needs reviewing, since Trade Unions now enjoy the rights of the underdog and privileges of topdogs simultaneously, the 'new right' is the only political group which has dared call for study and action. 'Special privileges accorded to the Trade Unions during the nineteenth century give them undue strength in contemporary society and unwarranted power over their own members . . .' runs the preamble to their suggestion that a Royal Commission be appointed to consider reforms, which would include 'provisions for the independent determination of members' rights and of disputes with other unions, and oblige unions to submit all restrictive practices to an independent tribunal to decide whether it is in the public interest.'

The group has expressed the feeling now current in many middle class and professional circles of widely differing political philosophies that equalitarianism has gone so far in many fields that it has brought new injustices in its train, especially to the salaried administrative, professional and academic personnel whose way of life has suffered at the same time as working class spending has grown. The group has worked out proposals for reform of the tax-system to permit what they courageously call 'greater inequality of net incomes' both for its incentives and in order to enable a wider growth of small and medium property-ownership. The British left, paradoxically, denounces these proposals, though some of its members applaud far greater inequalities in the Soviet Union.

On colonial questions the 'new right' has acted as the conscience of the Conservative Party. It has fought to prevent the inflamed situation in the Central African Federation turning into a party issue, with the Conservatives unconditionally backing the White Settler government and Labour acting as exclusive spokesman for the rights of Africans. For the past year or so they have been actively canvassing Conservative opinion against any increase in the constitutional rights and powers of the Federal Government of Rhodesia and Nyasaland without prior action to ensure that the majority of Africans positively support such a step. They have stressed Britain's duty to continue protecting the Africans' rights and opportunities for educational and economic progress as a step to racial partnership in a multi-racial commonwealth.

So much for some of their ideas, some of which, like 'World Refugee Year' have already been adopted. Equally impressive is the atmosphere in which they work. Their urbanity and acceptance of the inevitability of wide differences of opinion contrast favourably with the fanaticism and intolerance of so many reformers. Whereas the left, 'new' or 'old', has little time for reading right-wing publications, except to polemicize against them, the 'new right' is ready to learn from and acknowledge intellectual debts to the left and centre no less than to conservative sources. '. . . Labour's plan has these merits . . .'; '. . . Labour proposals have prodded the Conservatives into some much needed re-thinking of their own . . .'; phrases of this kind appear frequently in their writings.

Of course, one could argue that their urbanity and moderation spring from their economic, social, and personal security, and that it is the duty of the left to represent the impatience of the underdog. But experience has shown that the manual workers' representatives are usually the least fanatical and intolerant of the left, and the intolerance is more usually found among those left-wing intellectuals or semi-intellectuals who have harnessed Labour's wrongs, as one might say, to their own chariots.

The 'new right's' empiricism permits it to find a measure of common language with the non-doctrinaire left; this offers the hope that a dialogue, which would be of value to both sides, may yet emerge. But of course, the 'new right' still has a lot to do to educate its own *fauves* and backwoodsmen in the Conservative movement. Though Prime Minister Macmillan and some of his ministers regard the 'new right' benevolently, many Conservative constituency associations throughout the country still take their cue from elderly notables in the locality who look back nostalgically to the turn of the century. The task of re-educating the Conservative rank-and-file to the point where they no longer regard the 'new right' as irreverent and ill-disguised socialists will provide the 'Bow Group' and its supporters and reserves in the universities with political exercise which should stand them in good stead later on, when they set their sights higher.

These developments, significant though they may be, are still a long way from foreshadowing decisive change in the locus of the British party struggle. But they do at least show that Britain's right wing and ruling class, so often given up for lost by observers, still have reserves of vitality and, no less important, the ability to laugh at themselves.

A. V. Sherman



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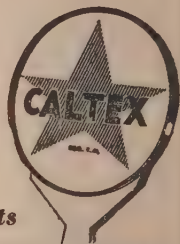
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## JAMES JOYCE IN ZURICH

*Clement Semmler*

ZURICH I found, when I was there not so long ago, to be a tranquil city of beauty and (after Sydney) almost indescribable cleanliness. The 'sea' of Zurich, a large and placid lake, dominated the city's topography with its wooded fringe and fine houses, its ferry boats and swans. There is everywhere the smell of pine and the sound of great bells—from the tower of St Peter's, the Grossmünster or Fraümünster, and of lesser bells—from smaller churches and convents. Lime trees grow along the quays; and under their bridges run the picturesque old rivers, the Limmat<sup>1</sup> and the Sihl. Reaching towards the sky by way of climbing, turning, narrow streets is the so-called Old Town.

This was the city which was a stopping place for a few weeks for James Joyce and Nora Barnacle<sup>2</sup> on their way to Trieste from Dublin in 1904; a refuge during the First World War; and a final destination and resting place in 1941. Because of these associations I was glad to be the guest of Dr Richard Gerber,<sup>3</sup> then of the University of Zurich, and some research students of the English Department who shared an interest in Joyce. We visited many of the haunts beloved of Joyce; the old-world Pfauen Restaurant, the Odeon, with its solemn faced waiters serving trays of foaming lager; the Königshalle and others. It was not hard to throw one's imagination back to those few years which, despite the terrible happenings in nearby countries, were certainly among the happiest in Joyce's life. After all, war did not concern him; he had no use for violence, each side of a dispute as he says being 'on the purely doffensive since the eternal were owlwise on their side every time'.<sup>4</sup> If this war had started because of a persecuted people he might have sympathized, but who could say that Great Britain, France Germany, Austria, Russia and the United States were persecuted people? Well, then, for God's sake, let things be finished and let men think of the arts again.

When Joyce arrived in Zurich in June 1915, after a difficult journey from Trieste, Giorgio was eleven, Lucia, dark-haired,

<sup>1</sup> 'Yssel that the Limmat' Joyce used to chortle to his suffering friends on their walks around Zurich; he included the pun in *Anna Livia Plurabelle*.

<sup>2</sup> Mentioned in *Our Friend, James Joyce* by Mary and Padraic Colum (Faber, 1959). Joyce did not go through a marriage ceremony until some years later.

<sup>3</sup> Author of *Utopian Fantasy* (Routledge, 1955).

<sup>4</sup> All quotations from *Finnegan's Wake* are from the 1946 Faber edition.

blue-eyed and slender was nine, *Ulysses* was taking shape, and indeed that fact was much more important to Joyce than was the Great War, for was he not marching into a new world of literature where no man had ever marched before? It is not true, as popularly supposed, that Joyce chose Zurich specifically as his war-quarters. As he wrote to Harriet Weaver:<sup>5</sup> 'I have just arrived here from Trieste after a rather adventurous time . . . I stopped here as it is the first big city after the frontier. I do not know where I shall live in Switzerland. Possibly here. . . .' They stayed for the first few weeks at the same *pension* or *gasthaus* as in 1904—then called the Gasthaus Hoffnung (ironically, for they had little but hope then), but now Gasthaus Doeblin, after the proprietor. Joyce felt that the name of his native city or its sound pursued them everywhere. When they moved to the next of their many domiciles, this time Reinhardstrasse 7, off the Seefeldstrasse, a fellow-tenant at the time was called Blum!

But at least their many moves gave rise to some good fortune. When they went into a flat at 73 Seefeldstrasse (today still a landmark in the street with its picturesque front garden which Joyce had noted), there lived there also Charlotte Sauerman, one of the leading sopranos of the Zurich Opera. (It is said that she came to know him because of his habit of singing snatches from arias on every occasion—Joyce of course had a fine tenor voice and was passionately fond of opera.) She decided to help him, and went to Mrs Harold McCormick, then living in the city, the only daughter of John D. Rockefeller and pleaded the cause of the Irish writer beset with serious eye trouble and struggling to earn a living and complete a vast work at the same time. Mrs McCormick generously made Joyce an allowance of one thousand Swiss francs a month. She, by the way, was a keen student of psychoanalysis which was probably why she was in Zurich, then the great centre of the art. She offered Joyce (according to Oliver St John Gogarty) an even more liberal allowance if he would submit to a test by Jung. Joyce indignantly refused. ('I can psokoonaloose myself any time I want'.) But years later Jung was to say to Patricia Hutchins<sup>6</sup> of Joyce's work: 'The peculiar mixture and the nature of the material as presented is the same as in cases of schizophrenia, but dealt with by an artist. The same things that you find in the madhouse, oh yes, but with a *plan*.' And also: '*Finnegan's Wake*? I read parts of it in periodicals but it was like getting lost in a wood.'

<sup>5</sup> 30 June, 1915. *Letters of James Joyce* (Faber, 1957).

<sup>6</sup> In *James Joyce's World* by Patricia Hutchins (Methuen, 1957).

Just prior to Mrs McCormick's help, Joyce had also had a windfall of one hundred sovereigns from the Privy Purse. Ezra Pound, with whom Joyce had now started to correspond, had written to Yeats, George Moore and Edmund Gosse, who in turn had importuned Prime Minister Asquith to help Joyce in his need. Joyce subsequently wrote to Yeats:<sup>7</sup> 'I need hardly say how acceptable this money is to me at such a time . . . it is very encouraging as a sign of recognition and I am very grateful to you. . . .'

Indeed, the Zurich period was one of the most fruitful of Joyce's activities as a letter-writer, perhaps directly due to the measure of independence these gifts gave him. He wrote a great deal to Harriet Weaver of *The Egoist*, about the publication of *Portrait of the Artist* and the progress of *Ulysses* (when he gave her the book rights of the latter he added: 'I am sure it is in more senses than one a Greek gift'); to American publisher Ben Huebsch (who made possible the publication of *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*); to Wells, Yeats, and Pound; and to personal friends such as John Quinn and Frank Budgen ('What the hell kind of an address is this?'). To Quinn, in a letter dated 10 July, 1917, he recorded an almost incredible fact of twentieth century cultural progress. 'Ten years of my life have been consumed in correspondence and litigation about my book *Dubliners*. It was rejected by forty publishers; three times set up and once burnt. It cost me about three thousand francs in postage, fees, train and boat fare, for I was in correspondence with one hundred and ten newspapers, seven solicitors, three societies, forty publishers and several men of letters about it. All refused to aid me, except Mr Ezra Pound. In the end it was published in 1914 word for word as I wrote it in 1905.'

Budgen stayed in Zurich for a period (his later book *James Joyce and the Making of Ulysses* has become a sine qua non of Joycean scholarship) and became one of a circle of friends who gathered round the author, not as hero-worshippers or sycophants, but as men of intelligence who appreciated his unique genius.

They comprised celebrities in their own right and other personal friends among ordinary Zurich citizens who had become friendly with Joyce and who are now remembered for that association. In the former group were those who were literary refugees too, and had found a haven in this beautiful old Swiss city. To meet them was to Joyce a stimulus. He got to know Stefan Zweig well, and Frank Wedekind the celebrated German

<sup>7</sup> *Letters*, 14 September, 1916.

dramatist who appeared in many of his own plays which Joyce attended. Then there was Carl Bleibtreu who had written a book purporting to show that the so-called Shakespeare plays were written rather by Roger Manners, Earl of Rutland; Joyce often discussed this theory with him and commemorated the meeting in a passage in *Ulysses*. He also got to know Felix Beran, the Austrian poet, mainly through their mutual devotion to opera—Joyce hardly missed an opera performance.

Among his personal friends were Claude Sykes (whom Joyce had known in Dublin; who organized the English Players in Zurich and persuaded Joyce and his wife to take an active part in their productions; and who also helped type some of the manuscript of *Ulysses*, Hans Gasser, Georges Borach, Nicholas Santos, A Greek of Corfu (who used to walk around the lake with him reciting bits of *The Odyssey*) and others. Seated at night in the Pfauen (their favourite meeting place) with carafes of Fendant de Sion,<sup>8</sup> that strong and greenish-amber Valais wine described by Colette as '*candide et effronté*', they would all talk of music, painting, the theatre, sometimes politics, and invariably letters. Herr Gasser recalls that Joyce liked very much to gather his friends in the evenings and have very good and very long meals, with well chosen wines. Then he would become most relaxed. 'One evening we had a meal in one of those small restaurants round the lake; we went there in a car, and after that meal, he lay on top of the car and explained that he wanted to see the world pass by from this position.'<sup>9</sup>

Borach (who was killed in a car accident near Zurich early in 1934), and who had been one of Joyce's language students, has recorded some of these conversations<sup>10</sup> with Joyce. Thus:

There are indeed hardly more than a dozen original themes in world literature. Then there is an enormous number of combinations of these themes. Tristan and Isolde is an example of an original theme. Richard Wagner kept on modifying it, often unconsciously, in *Lohengrin*, in *Tannhauser*; he thought he was treating something entirely new when he wrote *Parsifal*. . . .

In the last two hundred years we haven't had a great thinker. My judgment is bold, since Kant is included. All the great thinkers of recent centuries from Kant to Benedetto Croce have only cultivated the garden. The greatest thinker of all times in my opinion is Aristotle. Everything in his world is defined with wonderful clarity and simplicity. Later, volumes were written to define the same thing. . . .

<sup>8</sup> Joyce christened this wine 'Erzherzogin'—Archduchess—because of its *erzgeschmack* or brassy taste, which gradually converted his mood from one of quiet conversation to one of joking and fantasy. Joyce praised the white wine of Switzerland on all occasions, often to the sorrow of his French friends, as

Borach recalls also a significant utterance from Joyce about the Jews: 'The Talmud says at one point "We Jews are like the olives: we give our best when we are being crushed . . .";' and another about politics: 'I attach no importance to political conformity.'

Once on a Sunday afternoon my friends took me up into an alley of the Old Town and showed me a plaque on one of the houses commemorating that there had lived, during 1916 and part of 1917, Nicolai Lenin; for in peaceful old Zurich, the Father of the Revolution had laid his plans to shake the world. It is known that Lenin used the same library as Joyce and also frequented the Odeon; a subject indeed for an Imaginary Conversation.

For Joyce was involved to some extent on that morning in April 1917 when the news reached the habitués of the Pfauen Cafe that Lenin had just concluded a bargain with Ludendorff for Russian political exiles to pass through Germany in a sealed train and that there was to be an agreement between them. There was great argument. Grumbach, the correspondent for *L'Humanité* said it was treachery to help the German imperialists to prolong the war; he would expose the whole thing in the public debate he was to have with Lenin on the next night. Zweig was indignant about it all: even Romain Rolland, sitting in a corner, joined in the discussions and was apprehensive about the repercussions this would have upon the international peace movement. Jouve, the French pacifist poet, Beran and Rajaz, the peace champion and theology professor at Zurich University, were really cast down at the prospect of the strengthening of Germany's fighting power and the indefinite delaying of peace.

But when the tidings came to Joyce on the way of one of his daily routine visits to the newspaper library on the Limmatquai, he treated the affair as if it were some kind of practical joke. 'It's just like the Trojan horse to me. I suppose Ludendorff must be pretty desperate. Lenin and Ludendorff, eh?' And he smiled, his eyeglasses glinting in the spring sun. As always, whether it was the War, the Troubles or the Revolution, Joyce simply maintained his attitude of aloof and ironical neutrality.

the wine par excellence, as the 'Midsummer Night's Dream'. 'Red wine is like beefsteak,' he used to say, 'white wine is like electricity'. 'No wine here like the Archduchess' he wrote to Budgen from Trieste in 1919.

<sup>9</sup> In a BBC Third Programme feature, 'Portrait of James Joyce'.

<sup>10</sup> Translated from the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 3 May, 1931, by Professor Joseph Prescott, in *Meanjin*, Autumn, 1954.

In the midst of this 'the largest conglomeration of expatriates, refugees, adventurers and propagandists, probably that had ever been assembled together in one small city'<sup>11</sup> Joyce carried round always the tiny writing pads that fitted into his waistcoat pocket, and in which he jotted down the notes and sentences that were to be assembled into the mighty fabric of his *Ulysses*. As his friends of the time declare, his writing was bad enough as to be almost indecipherable; usually he carried with him a magnifying glass since his eyesight was so poor. But still the notes were jotted down, and as Frank Budgen records:<sup>12</sup>

I have seen him collect in the space of a few hours the oddest assortment of material; a parody on *The House that Jack Built*; the name and action of a poison; the method of caning boys on training ships; the nervous trick of a convive turning his glass in inward-turning circles; a Swiss music hall joke turning on a pun in Swiss dialect. . . .

You could imagine this then—in the street, at home, in conversation at the Pfauen, Odeon or Augustinerhof, even mounting to the Zurich Observatory where he often took young Georgio to see the stars. Joyce, indeed, found in the stars a good deal of his philosophy. He was in addition more than a little superstitious; he wore a number of rings with different stones, a sapphire, a topaz and a ruby to protect him from misadventure. One of his Zurich friends remembers he carried a rabbit's paw too. He always objected to an empty bottle on the table—he did not know why, except that it meant something to him. During thunderstorms he would be seized by an elementary fear of mountains and creep into his hotel in the Bahnhofstrasse. The Zurich mountain became then a *mont noir* to him, and he would not move from his place of shelter until it was over. Days and numbers had a deep significance for him—legendary, historical, magical. Perhaps it all stemmed from his religious youth; perhaps he was, if not 'yung', yet 'easily freudened'.

Zurich again it was which gave Joyce his last refuge, this time during the Second World War. He wanted only one thing, to find a place where work and meditation were still possible. It was 17 December, 1940, when he at last extricated himself from the confusions of his enforced stay in France and reached Zurich. 'Here we still know where we stand,' he said as he got out of the train and looked about him. He seemed thinner than usual, with his superior, rather mocking smile and half-astonished, half-absent eyes which, magnified by their glasses, seemed to

<sup>11</sup> Herbert Gorman, *James Joyce* (John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1941).

<sup>12</sup> In *James Joyce and the Making of Ulysses*.

live a life of their own. It is recalled that one of the first things he did was to set out for the Librairie Française to find for his grandson Stephen a French edition of the Greek legends. As they walked in the snow, hand in hand, the excited little boy pulled him forward, enchanted to see for the first time the white carpet of snow—while Joyce seemed to suffer from the dazzling light. There was a Renoir exhibition in Zurich at the time, and Joyce spent hours in front of it, fascinated though semi-blind.

His last recorded letter was written, a few days after his arrival, to the Mayor of Zurich. It read, in part:

*Die Verbindung zwischen mir und Ihrer gastfreundlichen Stadt dehnen sich über eine Reihe von fast vierzig Jahren aus, und in diesen peinlichen Zeiten fühle ich mich sehr geehrt, dass meine Gegenwart hier zum grossen Teil ich an der persönlichen Bürgerschaft Zürichs ersten Bürgers schulde.<sup>13</sup>*

On 9 January, 1941, Joyce had dinner with his old friend Paul Ruggiero at a restaurant near the Lake which served his favourite Neufchatel wine. Shortly afterwards he was seized with violent pain. He had been in a happy mood and rebelled humourously, as usual, against the strictly observed hour of closing. A neighbouring doctor, called in the middle of the night, tried too mild a treatment. Forty-eight hours later an operation was decided upon. But it was too late. Joyce began to wander in delirium that evening, and insisted that Nora Joyce, who had not left him, should put her bed by the side of his. On 13 January, at two o'clock in the morning, death came without his having recovered consciousness. It was just the thirteenth, the date Joyce had always avoided for his journeys and for all decisions which he had to make. That Joyce should have been taken ill on a Friday and have died on the thirteenth, touched those who knew his feeling.

The account of his burial, as recalled by eyewitnesses<sup>14</sup>—a friend, Frau Giedion, and Hans Gasser—I find strangely moving even terrifying. It was a cold wintry day; a mysterious sun, milky and round like the moon, seemed to hide behind a misty glass as it hung over the wooded hillside, high up near the

<sup>13</sup> 'The connection between me and your hospitable city extends over a period of nearly forty years and in these painful times I feel highly honoured that I should owe my presence here in large part to the personal guaranty of Zurich's first citizen.' *Letters*, 20 December, 1940.

<sup>14</sup> In the BBC feature 'Portrait of James Joyce' already referred to. These words, disjointed in places, are recorded as actually spoken. Frau Giedion and her husband, a Zurich professor, were close friends of the Joyce family.

Zurich zoo. It began to drizzle with rain as the hour approached According to Herr Gasser:

... there were no taxis any more, as the petrol rationing was very strict. I didn't—therefore I took a tram, and in this tram, going up the hill very slowly, there was assembled almost the whole funeral party. But they were all—the whole tram was, although I did not know many people, but they all talked about James Joyce. There was Mrs Someone, an old friend of his, there was Lord and Lady Derwent, who was cultural attaché at the British Legation in Berne during the war, and it was his eye-doctor, and the secretary of Paul Klee, the painter, as far as I remember, as it is rather a long time since. We arrived at the cemetery, and were directed into a chapel, but as James Joyce did not want to have a priest at his funeral, there was nobodyth ere, and the attendants of the mortician—they were rather—it was very strange to them, because they did not know what to do, as usually in Switzerland one has a priest, either Catholic or Protestant. The main speech was given by Lord Derwent, who was usually rather an intriguing sort of person, but, I think, as he had to perform an official duty, he performed a rather formal funeral speech. And after this we went out into the snow again, and the coffin was carried in front of us, and we walked right to the end of the wall, where the whole for the grave was dug. Meanwhile in the distance there was the faint roar of the wild animals in the zoo, and we stood round the grave, and again didn't quite know what to do, because again there was no priest, and this time not even an official funeral speech. So we hoaxed each other in a very embarrassed way until a very, very old man turned up—obviously a man who hovers over the grave, as one sees in almost every churchyard, men who seem to just wait till they are buried themselves. A tiny man who obviously was deaf, because he went to one of those attendants of the mortician, who was holding the rope which went under the coffin, as the coffin was not sunk yet into the grave, and he asked: 'Who is buried here?' And the mortician answered: 'Mr Joyce'. And again in front of the whole assemblance of mourners he seemed not to have understood it. He again asked: 'Who is it?' 'Mr Joyce?' he shouted, and at that moment, the coffin was lowered into the grave.

When I looked around me in Zurich, walked along the wide sweep of the Bahnhofstrasse, and the narrower Seefeldstrasse and by the Lake, I thought of the debt that Joyce would surely have admitted he owed to this city which had twice given refuge to his genius and eventually became his resting place. One Sunday morning I took a tram up beyond Zurich town to the beautifully kept tree-bordered little cemetery which lies on the green outskirts of the city. It was cold in November, so cold, and especially to an Australian who had barely left the new days of a Sydney summer. But as I looked down at a single flat stone with the legend, JAMES JOYCE 1882-1941, I was glad to think that I could be there on that winter's morning to pay, as it were, a pilgrim's homage to a great writer.

*Clement Semmler*

## A VALEDICTORY ODE

ON LEAVING THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

*Evan Jones*

*It should be autumn, wild leaves should be flying,  
Wind should have whipped the trees until they cried,  
Winter foretold in all the green world dying.  
But summer washes over in full tide:  
The bright expansive lawns are million-eyed  
And doves are calling softly from the trees,  
Their gentle rasping not to be denied.  
There must be tensions and infirmities  
But no harsh note discords the season's harmonies.*

Cool even in the drowsy summer air,  
This dark receptive building has now turned  
Alien to my last appraising stare,  
Although it is the shell in which I learned  
So much with which my heart has been concerned.  
Mortar and sand-stone cannot feed a flame  
In which the waste of learning might be burned,  
And when there is no echo of my name  
This maze of stairs and corridors will be the same.

So, having cleared the littered desk and shelves  
Of everything except accreted dust,  
I leave these walls to mutter to themselves  
Of decades of dull pedantry and lust,  
Inaudible to those they do not trust;  
And having left them neutral, cold and bare  
Return to other matters which I must  
Consider, having been so long my care.  
I conjure up an old and abstract love affair.

Minerva's owl is sleeping in the sun.  
Now I have watched it nod eight years away  
And know that its attention is hard-won  
Even by those whose life is in its sway.  
Those great hooked talons which I thought might flay  
Petitioners whose pleading was untrue

Have slept as patient as great claws of clay,  
And the great eyes have flickered for but few  
Of those who had set out to pay the goddess due.

Eight years ago I first began to court  
The patronage and wisdom of the owl  
And started slowly to refine my thought,  
Quailing beneath its academic scowl  
Till I had won the right to wear its cowl.  
It is comfortable, at last to have achieved  
The donnish manner and the shadowed jowl  
For whose conspicuous absence I had grieved  
More than in present comfort might be well believed,

But it seemed difficult to spin the thread  
Which now runs back so easily to them:  
So easily, because that past is dead  
And I choose not to live it all again,  
But view it with the distant acumen  
Common to those who follow Clio's trade.  
Barely a twinge can still surprise me when  
I trace the choices and the friendships made  
Through patterned form and shade to patterned form and shade.

Scholars and wits have been my company  
For these last years (I choose to disregard  
The fools that batten on their energy,  
Although quite to forget them will be hard),  
And now that I uncertainly discard  
This gown which is a symbol of vocation—  
Or so I thought—I know that I am barred  
From daily intercourse and conversation  
With men whose thought achieves a leisured maturation.

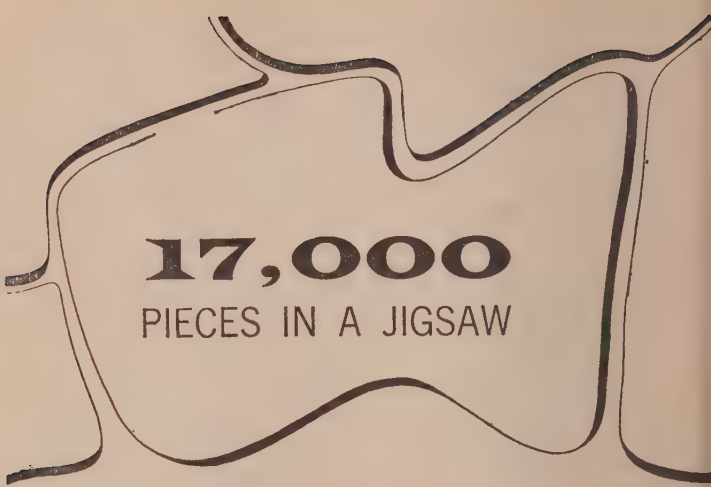
To patience which desires it, I bequeath  
The open field of scholarship I traced  
And the complexities which lie beneath  
The tangle of ideas that I laid waste  
So ruthlessly, and in so little haste.  
'Promising work', the men who judged it said,  
'But too ambitious. He is not disgraced:  
A lifetime's detailed study lies ahead.'  
But, Clio, those words meant that our romance was dead.

So I must leave, and leave not to return:  
Whether because I may no longer stay,  
Because I questioned what I had to learn,  
Or, having learned it, what I had to say,  
Is little to the point on this last day.  
And if I move towards some destiny  
Or have for now or ever lost my way  
Are questions in the dark, but I can see  
An ending that is clear of ambiguity.

Years, friends and learning I must bid farewell:  
Farewell the dark years that I leave behind—  
I loved you more than I can ever tell,  
And keep your wild complexities in mind;  
To those to whose good company I inclined  
I bid farewell—keep me in your regard;  
And to the abstruse pleasures that we find  
In searching texts, in filing card on card,  
In minute thought, also farewell. I leave you scarred.

The angel falters in the cross of stars.  
*Postera crescans laude*: afterwards  
Our brows might wear the simple wreath she bears;  
And this is all the comfort she affords  
A doubtful crown and three out-dated words—  
Too little and too much to leave behind  
But still a gift with which the Muse accords,  
So proud and insubstantial is the kind  
Of promise that must stimulate the abstract mind.

*And yet the afternoon is calm outside,  
The doves keep calling softly from the trees;  
There was no promise given or denied  
And summer lies inscrutably at ease.  
Free in their unconsidered liberties  
The doves are not aware that I depart  
And sing their unaffected certainties:  
Whatever losses most affect the heart  
Can echo in no song except the song of art.*



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## FALSE PROPHET

*H.A.Lindsay*

A NUMBER of men and several women have claimed to be latter-day Messiahs. Some have gained large followings—and all left their converts lamenting. None, however, made such outrageous claims as did John Alexander Dowie, nor did any of them end with such a resounding crash.

On 2 June, 1901, Dowie declared himself to be a reincarnation of the Prophet Elijah and stated that he would convert the Pope and take over the entire Catholic Church. He started to build a 'Heaven on Earth' settlement in the USA and his following grew to a million and a quarter people, scattered all over the world. These converts subscribed about £4,000,000 to the cause.

In return they received 'Zion Security Bonds' which were personally guaranteed by Dowie. They were promised dress-circle seats in heaven—also personally guaranteed by Dowie. Within a few years most of that money had vanished—'Dowie-ized' was the term coined to fit the case by *The Bulletin*—and the disillusioned followers were reviling the new Elijah as a liar and embezzler.

Dowie was born in Scotland in 1847. He came to Adelaide with his parents in 1860, completed his studies by going to Edinburgh University and was ordained a minister of the Congregational Church. Returning to South Australia, he was placed in charge of a country parish at Alma, where he soon earned fame as a fiery, vituperative preacher. He married Jane Darling, member of a well-known and respected mercantile family.

Dowie soon received a call to a Congregational Church at Manly, New South Wales, then to a far bigger parish at Newtown, Sydney. But he sought a wider field than this and in 1879 he announced that he had received 'a Divine ordinance to inaugurate the grandest religious movement the world has ever known'.

He left the church, set himself up as an evangelist and began to rant against Mohammedanism, Jews, Roman Catholics, Methodists, doctors, Freemasons, tobacco, alcoholic liquors, work, practically all forms of amusement and a few other things. He had no trouble in filling Sydney theatres and had even bigger congregations when he moved to Melbourne, where his followers subscribed the money to build a 'Zion tabernacle'. Soon faith-healing was added to his activities.

But before long Dowie realized that there was only one place where his great ambition could be realized: the USA. With money raised on promissory notes, and accompanied by his wife and family, he went to America. At first, like any third-rate evangelist, he had to preach on street corners in New York, but his following grew apace. The day came when he preached at Madison Square Garden and the huge building was packed to capacity at meeting after meeting.

Here he announced the founding of 'The Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion' with eight hundred charter members. His followers subscribed the money with which he purchased ten square miles of country near Chicago as the site for his 'sinless community' of Zion city. There, Dowie announced, he would tolerate no breweries, distilleries, saloons, drug stores, tobacco shops, physicians, surgeons, brothels, theatres, lodge rooms, gambling houses, the keeping of pigs, the eating of pork 'or any other uncleanness!' Zion City would need no hospitals, for he would cure all ills by the laying on of hands. Doctors and newspapers derided his claims, but this only advertized him, and converts flocked to him in droves. Zion began to take shape on the sandy shore of Lake Michigan, but soon Dowie realized that such a community could not subsist on preaching alone. He established a confectionery factory, which was indeed a model of cleanliness, but it provided work for only a hundred people. Then Dowie made a really big catch.

He not only converted, by correspondence, a leading Nottingham lace manufacturer named Samuel Stevenson, but also persuaded that hitherto hard-headed businessman to transfer his entire plant to Zion City. A new factory was built there covering five acres of floor space, but Stevenson didn't remain under the new Elijah's spell. Disillusionment came when his accountant showed him that he no longer owned the business—all he possessed had been signed over to Dowie.

Stevenson began a court action, claiming fraud and misrepresentation, but on the urgent advice of his lawyers he settled out of court for £30,000 and returned to England, wiser but very much poorer. Dowie claimed a victory over 'The Powers of Darkness', but Judge Tuley declared: 'The credulity of human nature, cupidity of investors and blind confidence in John Alexander Dowie are the only assets of the Zion Investment Company.' The flow of cash from new converts dwindled and some of the original charter members wanted their bonds redeemed.

Dowie's remedy was to embark on a world tour whose object

was to enrol converts by the thousand and secure millions of pounds of new money. Accompanied by a small army of deacons, deaconesses and lesser followers, and heralded by a fanfare of publicity, he arrived in Sydney in 1904 and held his first meeting there on 7 February.

Standing on the platform, he made an impressive figure. His bald dome of a head, surrounded by a mane of white hair, and his long beard gave him a truly patriarchal appearance. His encyclopaedic knowledge of the Scriptures enabled him to quote a text in support of everything which he claimed. He spoiled it by exhibiting a most un-Christian bad temper and a savage vindictiveness. Yet in spite of the rowdiness of his Sydney meetings he made many converts there.

These people invested all their money in his Zion City Bonds and set off, with loud hosannas, for Dowie's promised land in the USA. There was a similar success in Melbourne a week later, but when he moved on to Adelaide he met his Waterloo. Many people there had known him as a youth, then as the minister of a country parish, and they were completely sceptical about his claims.

University and School of Mines students saw in the visit a made-to-order opportunity for horseplay. Dowie's band of 'Zion guards'—brawny young men employed to deal with interjectors and who definitely did not turn the other cheek to the smiter—refused to issue tickets to anyone whom they thought might create a disturbance at the meetings, but the students overcame this little difficulty by securing a sample card and persuading a printer to run off a few hundred copies.

By presenting these forgeries at the doors of Adelaide Town Hall, by joining up with elderly people, as if members of a family group and by wearing expressions of an appropriate solemnity, most of the students gained admittance.

Dowie began his first discourse in Adelaide with a furious attack on smoking. 'You defile the temple of the body with that filthy poison, tobacco!' he ranted. 'You make stinkpots of yourselves. That's what you are—stinkpots, stinkpots, stinkpots!'

This type of preaching had brought numerous converts elsewhere, but now it gave those students their cue. They had come armed with small ampoules, they dropped them on the floor, crushed them with their heels and the stench of asafoetida, carbon bisulphide and sulphuretted hydrogen filled the air.

The result was an uproar, with members of the audience trying to escape from the stench of those very real stinkpots, police and Zion guards trying to eject trouble-makers and Dowie,

purple with rage, calling down hellfire and brimstone on the heads of those who derided him.

'The people of San Francisco refused to hearken to me,' he roared, 'and fire and earthquake destroyed their city!'

Another meeting was called, and this time the Zion guards refused admission to all who did not carry a new type of invitation card. Dowie was able to deliver an oration, but he made two very bad blunders. He attacked that very popular monarch, Edward VII, and he vilified *The Register*, then Adelaide's leading newspaper, for printing an unfavourable report of his first meeting.

'Be warned!' he shouted, shaking a finger towards the newspaper office. 'Every editor who attacked me in America has since died!'

But the editorial staff of *The Register* took up the challenge. Urgent cables went across the world, replies came within an hour or two and next day the paper carried an article which informed the public that Dowie was a fraud and a liar. One of his claims was that he was the illegitimate son of a great Scots nobleman. The paper showed that this man had died two years before the date of registry of Dowie's birth. So it went on; one verbal body-blow after another.

An enraged crowd gathered at the York Hotel, but Dowie had left. They went to the home of his wife's brother, John Darling, but again drew blank. Dowie had sought sanctuary in the home of a follower at Mount Lofty and there he remained hidden until he was smuggled aboard the mail steamer a minute before she sailed.

Dowie refused to go ashore when the liner called in at Western Australia, but a man came aboard and produced one of the promissory notes by which the new Elijah had financed his trip to the USA. 'You've ignored all my letters,' the visitor said grimly, 'but now you'll pay up, with interest to date—or the police will serve the warrant they hold.' Dowie paid up and that man earned the distinction of being one of the very few people, out of many thousands, whose money was returned.

When Dowie arrived in London, he discovered that, on the advice of the Metropolitan Police, all owners of halls there were refusing to allow him to use them for meetings. He abandoned his plans for a tour of Britain and returned to Zion City, USA.

Here he found plenty of trouble. The people who had flocked there from Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and all over the USA had discovered that the fine homes shown in the illustrated prospectus were for the hierarchy of deacons and deacon-

esses. The rank and file of converts were expected to live in board and tar-paper huts, offering little shelter from the winter blizzards—and there was scant employment.

The final crash occurred on 13 March, 1906. Jane Dowie had stood by her husband with unflinching courage in adversity. She had protected him from personal violence on more than one occasion. But she disowned him when he informed her that he intended 'to put her away and, as authorized in a special dispensation direct from heaven, to marry twelve young and beautiful virgins'. Gladstone Dowie, the son, joined with his mother in a denunciation.

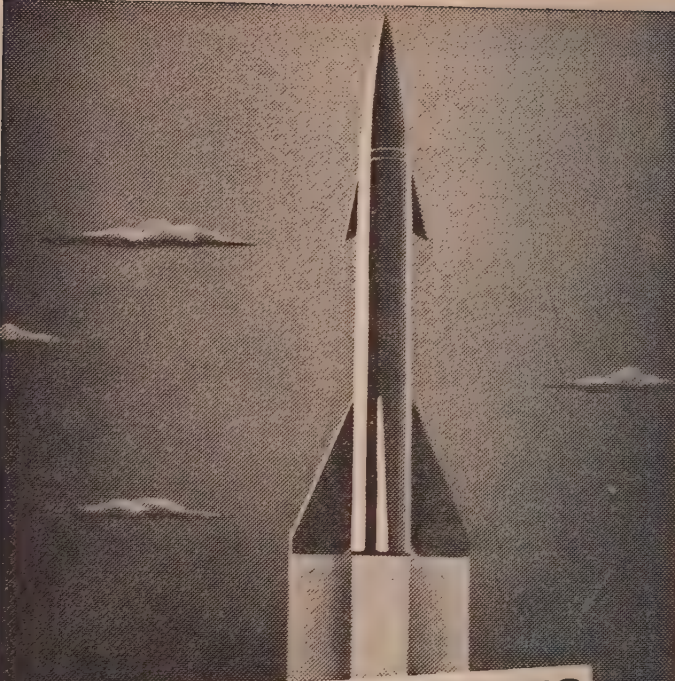
In Zion City's official newspaper, *Leaves of Healing*, they announced that John Alexander Dowie had been deposed, but that all money invested in the church was safe. This latter statement, however, proved to be no more than a pious hope. An audit disclosed that out of the millions which dupes had handed to Dowie, only a few hundred thousand dollars had been invested in anything tangible.

All the rest had been spent as fast as it came in on buildings, including an imposing tabernacle, in paying salaries to a huge staff of church officials and in publishing tracts and booklets. The world tour which proved such a fiasco had swallowed £200,000, while £7,000 had gone on buying presents for young, pretty women. £40,000 had been spent on jewelled vestments for Dowie to wear.

Dowie's family smuggled him out of the country and the law left him alone, for a paralytic stroke had made him a doddering old lunatic. Within another year he was dead and by that time Zion City was deserted except for a few caretakers, looking after buildings on behalf of creditors. Some of the misguided followers had friends or relations who were able to send them the fare home. Others had to seek employment in the USA.

Medical science may have the last word in the strange case of John Alexander Dowie. It exhibits typical symptoms leading to General Paralysis of the Insane, an end-result of syphilitic infection. First comes a strong stimulation of the brain cells, often revealed in delusions of grandeur coupled with daring, original business ventures, or an overmastering ambition to lead a following. Then gradually the overtaxed brain breaks down. The initial and often brilliant schemes are replaced by wild, extravagant ones. The victim loses the power to gain additional followers while those who had been converted begin to doubt. Finally comes either lunacy and death, or degeneration into a sullen savagery.

H.A.Lindsay



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## STUDY IN BLACK AND WHITE

*John Meredith*

IN THE 1958 issue of *The Journal of the English Folk Dance & Song Society* there appeared the words and music of a folk song from Norfolk titled 'The Maid of Australia', with a note by A.L.Lloyd stating: 'It does not seem to have persisted in Australia, and one Antipodean folklorist has suggested that this may be because, in at least one of its versions, the song appears to refer to an Aboriginal girl. Miscegenation is a theme that Australian folklore inclines to avoid.'

I cannot agree with either Lloyd or the anonymous 'Antipodean folklorist' on this statement. My experience has been that Australian folklore not only fails to avoid mentioning romantic encounters between white bushmen and aboriginal women, but in many examples, the author of the ballad has gone out of his way to introduce the subject. In the outback towns of Western New South Wales, miscegenation continually crops up as the subject of bawdy jokes and rhymes wherever men meet to drink and yarn.

Most of these particular ballad swill be frowned upon by the sociologist because of their derogatory attitude toward the aboriginals, but they are of obvious importance to the folklorist. The majority of the songs and recitations considered here came into being during the latter half of the 19th century, but one or two date back to the convict days.

'The Convict and the Australian Lady' first appeared in *The Book of Ballads*, edited by Bon Gaultier to whom the verses are attributed:

*Thy skin is dark as jet, ladye,  
Thy cheek is sharp and high,  
And there's a cruel leer, love,  
Within thy rolling eye.  
These tangled ebon tresses  
No comb has e'er gone through;  
And thy forehead, it is furrowed by  
The elegant tattoo!*

*Nay, squeeze me not so tightly!  
For I am gaunt and thin;  
There's little flesh to tempt thee*

*John Meredith*

*Beneath a convict's skin.  
I came not to be eaten;  
I sought thee, love, to woo;  
Besides, bethink thee, dearest,  
Thou'st dined on cockatoo.*

*Then come with me, my princess,  
My own Australian dear,  
Within this grove of gum-trees  
We'll hold our bridal cheer!  
Thy heart with love is beating,  
I feel it through my side:—  
Hurrah, then for the noble pair,  
The Convict and his Bride!*

Shearers have made the major contribution to our native folk literature both as writers and as thematic material. In the environment of the outback shed, where life was womanless excepting for aboriginal women from wandering tribes, it was only natural that miscegenation should be a popular subject for ribald jokes. A man who cohabited with an aboriginal woman was known as a 'combo', while the women were called 'black velvet', or, in the singular, 'a bit of black velvet'. The popular attitude was summed up in 'The Goondiwindi', a favourite with bushmen for many years:

*For it's Barefoot Sally is my name,  
And Wellshot is my station,  
And it's no disgrace, the old black face,  
It's the colour of my nation.*

*Oh, it's boomeri-eye and mind your eye,  
And don't kick up a shindy,  
For we'll all waltz in and collar a gin,  
And dance the wild corroboree.*

*From the Terry-Hie-Hie to Mungindi,  
And down to Goondiwindi,  
We'll dance and drink and fight all night  
And dance the wild Corroboree.*

*My boyfriend from the Tallwood town,  
Way down from Goondiwindi,  
He danced me round barefoot on the ground,  
And rolled me in the bindi.*

Barefoot Sally was well known to bushmen, but probably no less so than another lubra, celebrated in folk song as 'Black Alice'. I have met a number of bushmen who sing this song; it appeared, anonymously in Paterson's *Old Bush Songs*, but authorship is claimed by 'Ironbark' (G. Herbert Gibson) who included it in his *Ironbark Chips and Stockwhip Cracks* in 1893:

*Oh! Don't you remember black Alice, Sam Holt,  
Black Alice so dusky and dark—  
The Warrego gin with the straw through her nose,  
And teeth like a Moreton Bay shark?  
The villainous sheep-wash tobacco she smoked  
In the gynyah down there by the lake;  
The grubs that she gathered, the lizards she stewed,  
And the damper you taught her to bake?*

Another Warrego gin was also celebrated in song and recitation, although her name is not mentioned in the ballad. I have collected 'The Warrego Lament' both as a song and a recitation:

*Have you been up in Queensland?  
If you have, you'll know the same,  
Turned out upon the Warrego,  
Cunnamulla is its name.  
  
I fell in love with a pretty girl there,  
I'll have you all to know.  
She was black, but what of that?  
Queen of the Warrego.  
She was just the sort for a bushman,  
She'd drink rum and she'd smoke.  
In her hand she carried the boomerang,  
She wore the possum cloak.*

The narrator goes on to describe how he came to a financial arrangement with the "Warrego Queen" and concludes with a flippant description of a quack doctor's treatment of his subsequent infection by a venereal disease. As is common with songs of this sort, many of the verses are not suitable for publication. One shearer's ballad called 'Black Velvet' tells, with Chaucerian vigour of a white man who became so accustomed to associating with black women that he developed an embarrassing frigidity toward white women.

There are many recitations and songs, which, while miscegenation is not the actual theme, go out of their way to introduce the topic; sometimes there is only a line, sometimes

a whole stanza—and usually the reference is unprintable. Some typical examples are to be found in versions of 'The Swank (or Flash) Stockman', the 'Man from Thargominda', 'The Bastard from the Bush', 'The Old Bullock Dray', and 'The Ryebuck Shearer'. Jim Burgoyne's 'The Daly River-Oh' also hints at the pleasure that may be had with 'a little dark maid'. Then there is an unprintable song, which enjoys some popularity in the Bundaberg (Q.) district, called 'The Dawson River Gin', which further extols the delights of miscegenation.

The literary balladists of the nineties period made frequent use of situations involving black and white folk. There is, for example, H.Head's 'Mr and Mrs Martin', in which Mrs Martin, an aboriginal woman, explains away her third son's white skin by saying that the lad lived on white bread and sugar! Another balladist of the same period, E.S.Emerson ('Milky White'), in his ballad about 'Mac's Half-Caste', manages to write a poem which is humorous without being derogatory toward the aborigines, and in which he even manages to have a dig at the 'new-chum Pommy' at the same time:

*Mac's half-caste wife was all the talk  
From Derby miles along the coast;  
You wouldn't meet in ten years' walk  
A fitter subject for a toast.*

*The daughter of a golden zone  
Where warm lights always seem to dwell,  
She had a beauty all her own—  
A tropic charm remembered well.*

In addition to the songs and ballads, there are many examples of yarns, or formalized prose pieces which circulate orally in the bush concerning white bushmen and their relationships with aboriginal women. The best known are probably the 'Jacky-Jacky' series. There are literally dozens of these stories, all concerned with situations involving Jacky-Jacky, his lubra Mary, black sheep, white sheep, the white boss and his station-hands and his wife. In this series of folk-tales, 'Jacky-Jacky' generally but not always, comes out on top, scoring a victory over the white boss. No doubt, many of the foregoing examples are not particularly wholesome, and are hardly likely to continue in oral circulation for much longer in an age of more enlightened attitudes toward the coloured races, yet they are important examples of our folklore, which, if it is to be studied at all, must be studied as a whole.

John Meredith

## HOW LIKE AN ONION

*K. Semmens*

I saw a man walk down the street  
His hat was smart, his suit was neat.

But though they matched his jaunty pace  
They didn't suit his haunted face.

I thought I'd find the man beneath.  
I might as well have saved my breath.

I greeted him with outstretched hand:  
He didn't seem to understand.

I tore the clothes from off his back:  
His eyes peered through a wary crack.

I wrenched the flesh clean from the bone  
And thought I heard the prisoner groan.

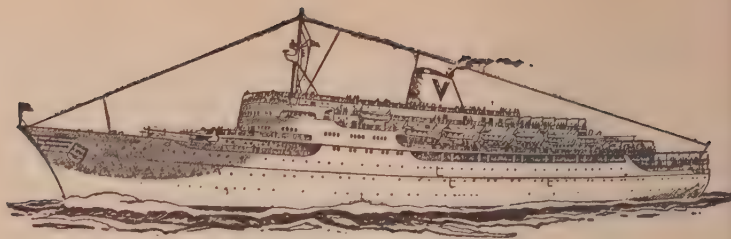
So then I burst the ribcage wide:  
The heart inside beat like a bird.

But when I reached to grasp the core  
He must have flown a shade before

For when I laid the chambers bare  
The room was empty, still the air.

I thought I'd find the man beneath.  
I might as well have saved my breath.

While he escaped on secret feet  
A suit of clothes walked down the street.



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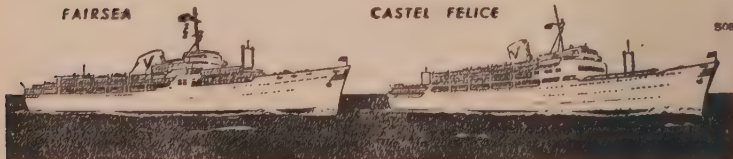
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## THE POETRY OF KENNETH SLESSOR

*Charles Higham*

KENNETH SLESSOR'S poetry already belongs to Australia's literary past. He has not written a poem of substance for nearly two decades, and his 'Beach Burial', is not among his best works. In our culture, he exists as an assignment, an unexplored presence whom necessity may one day make us study. Whereas Judith Wright or A.D.Hope are closely read by contemporary *littérateurs*, Slessor is not so read. His reputation rests on three or four long poems, and perhaps the wartime lyric I have spoken of: critical literature about him, if one excepts Vincent Buckley's rather cool appraisal in a recent book, barely exists. Yet no-one pushing ahead a university course which took Australian literature into account would fail to talk of him as one of the important figures; it is ironical that the least academic of our poets, the one who most consistently has spoken in simple earnestness to common men and women, has every appearance of becoming a dead object, ready for some curriculum.

When Slessor's first poems were published shortly after the first world war, they were read with a quickening delight as symbols of youth resurgent from the mire and wreckage. They represented the healthful and buoyant mood of that youth after the wan exhausted homecomings, the hollow fanfares. In his first publications, the poet seemed to be tossing aside war's mantle of exhaustion in a vigorous way. With the guidance of his confrères the Lindsays, he published verses about the coupling of fauns and dryads, the pleasures of gay colours, and the tangible delights of rich surfaces. In his poems, he created a brittle world which, spun as it was from the literature of decadence, exactly mirrored his own responses.

He upheld, with his fellows, the fleshpots of Rubens, committing Botticelli to the outer darkness, to 'a medieval home of rigid and depressed forms'. Dante, Milton and Michelangelo were dismissed in his precepts. 'Unless Gaiety is added to realism' propounded the Slessor-Lindsay parochial magazine *Vision*, 'the pestilence of Zola or the locomotor ataxia of Flaubert must ultimately attack the mind.'

In Slessor's early work we always find the young man aiming at the heroic pose. Spirited and gifted, with a natural charm and alacrity, he was wholeheartedly youthful and searching—following Keats' dictum that 'life is a vale of soul-making'.

He placed his faith in intuition, in the delighted apprehension of the physical world, in the rejection of abstract ideas. The fleshly dainties, such as Keats spoke of, were his daily pre-occupation, and his verse strove always—I am adapting a phrase of his own—to ‘bottle the sunset’: to show the beauty of the phenomenal world through a pellucid glass of clear and delicate words.

Some years later, Slessor was to endorse with his characteristic enthusiasm Edith Sitwell’s statement that: ‘Poetry is . . . the result not of reason, not of intellect. It is the flower of magic, not of logic.’ And he has spoken of poetry as being ‘to the rest of literature what the violet light is to the spectrum . . . the last and loveliest colour, it points to something invisible beyond itself. The rest of literature points to poetry.’

Allied to this romantic conviction was the sensual self-indulgence, the easy addiction to glancing, glittering surfaces, to the gimcrack, the opulent and the bizarre. Food, often of rare kinds, and curious liqueurs represented most that was joyful in the world. There is less of sexual delight in the early poems, less pleasure, in fact, with the release of joy of human beings in each other’s company, than there is in the cool resplendence of inanimate, expensive and sybaritic objects. As an example, one might take his humorous pieces, *Darlinghurst Nights*, which purport to deal with sexual diversions in Kings Cross, and are decorated by an artist with brisk Twenties *élan*. In these light verses, the luxury, the shiny collection of green Rolls Royces, Tosti music, pink, green and frosted glasses glinting on the silver trays, and the girls with zinc-white faces peering at their callers through watery gaslight, shimmer through the images as expressions of inner bliss, a total entry into the poet’s dream-world, cluttered with gaudy nick-nacks and smart and brittle emotions. These rhymes are ways of describing an appetite, a lust for physicality, but they exclude sexual emotion, and hence appear cold and lifeless, worshipping mere things.

In ‘Earth Visitors’, too—the first poem in Slessor’s collected edition, and one which he regards as his initial setpiece, his point of departure—he speaks of ‘watery glass’, ‘thick panes’, ‘lanterns hung frostily’. The ‘strange riders’ he speaks of, descending on a township with their cloaks streaming in the breeze, are not physical beings of bone and sinew, but rather objects in a glittering puppet-show, twitched on Slessor’s strings. When the men who sleep with the inn girls leave, they relinquish threads of gold, metal scales, a feather, as their mementoes. These curiously feminine relics symbolize fastidiousness and

aestheticism rather than abandon; the effect, because of the concentration on objects, on gimcrackeries, is antiseptic rather than sensual.

Similarly, in 'Nuremburg', Slessor speaks of an uninhabited place, a city without human beings. Everything is described—the 'sun-steeped room', the 'quaint horologe', the 'leaden trees'. Yet the landscape is populated by only one figure, and that is Dürer, who is its artistic author. To describe a city without its people is significant of Slessor's inhuman early approach. He was writing sensuously about insensate things; and in the end this early versification is empty, devoid of a human reference.

In other poems, there is a striving to mirror Norman Lindsay's pneumatic nude paintings, and even to risk the prophetic utterance: 'Pan At Lane Cove' confidently foretells the invasion of that suburb by silver-sandalled barbaric playmates. Past evils are to be forgotten ('Taoist') and clergymen, in this new state of things, are to be swept away from 'altars of their doleful creed' by lustily whooping cherubim ('Rubens Innocents'). Characteristically, Slessor, writing about Marco Polo in his poem of that name, quickly dismisses him as a man, emphasizing rather the trappings of Kublai Khan's court, the myrtles, elephants, fish, cranes and wine in china bowls. The poem ends with the declaration: 'I long to be barbarian', and the author's wish in this is to emulate the Khan himself; yet he conveys nothing of Kublai's barbarism, giving instead a precious, luxuriant picture of a highly civilized and over-refined court, its golden ritual.

Such, then, is the supposed 'Dionysiac' yearning in Slessor's work which attracted or repelled his contemporaries; nothing Dionysiac at all, for all its pretence at that, but an aloof and dilettanteish preoccupation with pretty nothings in an art bloodless but spry. The resemblance to the London literature of the eighteen-nineties is clear: the emotions foppish and desiccated, the physicality puerile and diffused, the discipline imposed rather than operating from within. The decadence and puerility were to fall away with increasing maturity; so, too, the preoccupation with literature and drawings as sources of inspiration. But the nostalgia for a romanticized past, the lack of realism and sternness in the poetic outlook, long remained. In 'Thieves' Kitchen', with its jaunty evocation of an orgy, he comes out crudely but importantly with the first open statement of a theme which will recur to the very end: that life is short and to be enjoyed with a vigorous indiscipline; that flesh, which decays, must be indulged while it, and time, are ripe. He speaks, in many poems

of these early days, about an ideal eighteenth-century world, the world of William Hickey, back from India and bent on capricious diversion; or of Boswell, scampering after a pretty leg. The world of these verses is populated with fat kitchen-boys, flagons, wenches being tossed in white beds; yet these figures in a masquerade are scarcely more real than the sweets and bottles which preceded them. There is continually the sense that the ideal world they inhabit cannot be reached, that the poet frets after it in vain. In 'The Ghost', wild revels are summoned up, but in the last two lines the summoner is revealed as an evanescent spirit, pressing its face on a pane from which the light, the glow of human comfort and company has gone forever, gazing into a relinquished and empty house. And in 'Stars', where the astral myriads are compared to berries in harvest, candles, link-boys, and other such fruitful and glowing things, there is suddenly the shocked realization of the black cups of space between the heavenly bodies, opening 'Infinity's trap-door, eternal and merciless'.

This is the logical result of Slessor's love for externals, for surfaces. The actual fruits and splendours of human love, the bearing of children, the changing beauties of the consequent seasons, of growing up and growing old, are nowhere to be found in these poems. There is no blessedness, no calm and permanence and tranquillity. Instead, there is a passion for those very things which are least substantial and most quickly extinguished in human life.

That these are poems without faith—sad and despairing poems for all their jollity, written in a darkness of being—becomes increasingly clear as Slessor's art develops. 'The Night-Ride', about a train's pause at a country station in the early morning, is full of the darkness which Slessor believes will envelop us all; full of

*Hurrying unknown faces,—boxes with strange labels—*

*All groping clumsily to mysterious ends,—*

*Out of the gaslight, dragged by private Fates.*

There is, in poems of this kind, nothing so positive as a dialectic; they assert the pain and futility of the physical world simply through familiar images. Slessor's emotion of a certain time—in this case during the pause at Rapptown station—has later pushed the poem into being, and the energy of the lines springs from instinctive passion rather than intellectual force. In 'The Night-Ride', and in 'A Sunset', the sovereign power is darkness; darkness of physical deprivation, not of moral or mental blindness. Without his dainties, this early Slessor seems lost; without the

glancing surfaces of Darlinghurst, the Sydney harbour waters, or Hickey's prose, there is a dead landscape into which the poet looks:

*Tree ringed with death, the creek with its bells clanking,  
Dried like white bone. Even our voices are estranged.  
Darkness chokes the river.*

And what, in these poems, can hide the encroaching chasm, shut off death and its terrors? Only the shower of gems, the wild laugh, the cavorting lutanist and his tune; the prancing Tritons of 'Realities', when

*no dark remains,  
Nor silence, but there is laughter like bells in air.*

Violent sounds—the galloping of the earth-visitors, the voice calling in 'Music', and the carnival cacophony in the same poem—all are contrived to blot out the dread of silence which, for Slessor, has been the sound of death. The poems have no room for meditation, not even for the luxury of quietness. They too gallop, frantically gay and with an animus against nothing save perhaps peace and order.

Thus, the poem is a kind of package of sweets and fancies to be jostled, to drown out fear. But the fear returns; the aftermath of these verse junketings is often a kind of poetic hangover, expressed in languid and exhausted lines. Then, just when it seemed that its own impetus would exhaust this poetry. Slessor found an image which made him turn from Lindsay delicacies, from Darlinghurst Nights and the dryads. He became obsessed with the sea.

It was his first image of permanence; he had now found something in which he could believe. With his discovery of the sea, he became a poet not of frenzy but of calm; not of escapism but of exploration. In the poems of his early maturity, the ocean seems to fix his mind: with its consistency, its glaucous indifference and coolth, it represents the darkness Slessor had feared, but unlike space and the black nights full of wind, it is an acceptable, not a fearful darkness and void. It drew him because of its separateness from human business; never a poet of human life, for all his 'human' emotionalism, Slessor was drawn to an element, water, which did not nourish or increase human beings, but sucked them down or drew a barrier between them; and with this natural attraction, Slessor's flowing, tidal kind of poetry came gradually to meet and join with its perfect subject.

You see it in 'Captain Dobbin', with its Eliotic picture of the retired seaman, gazing at and recording the names and times of the ships which pass before his harbourside villa window. Dobbin

stacks up mementoes of the sea in the form of maps, flasks of seawater, ships in glass bottles; as hopeless a snatching of flotsam from the jaws of oblivion as you could find; and all the time he yearns for the howling of a sea chanty in a rocked ship,

*shrieked in the wind's jaws,*

*By furious men; not tinkled in drawing-rooms*

*By lap-dogs in clean shirts.*

Yet, and it is Slessor's ironical touch that makes it so disturbing, this 'lap-dog' in his clean shirt is just what Captain Dobbin has become; a pink and rounded shell of a man, in whose ears the sea still sounds a minatory echo. As a symbol of what Slessor believes humanity is, the poem could not be more mournful and chilling, despite its affectionate, lucid picture of calm old age. For while Dobbin sits, ruminant and rubicund,

*in his little cemetery of sweet essences,*

*With fond memorial-stones and lines of grace,*

the dead bodies, we are reminded, rock in the harbour, in 'the blind tide/ That crawls it knows not where, nor for what gain.' So too in 'The Sea-Fight', he describes 'old, patient, baleful, spying sea,' and 'the huge forceps of the storm', (and elsewhere he has imagined 'life with remorseless forceps'); but

*deeper seas are damned in space*

*And fiercer storms can scream in clay.*

'Five Visions of Captain Cook' takes up the theme of man's efforts to face the oblivious maw which yawns ahead; the nobility and final futility of striving against the sea, which has now become almost synonymous in Slessor's verse with the flow of destiny itself. Cook, a romantic figure sailing into the unknown darkness of mapless seas, becomes a symbol of ripe moral courage in the face of an empty future, mesmerizing his crew into ignoring or mocking the dangers ahead. But in counterpoint to this Quixotic presence is the blind, Scotland-bound Alexander Home, telling his futile tales of Cook, living by a dead hearth and dreaming of the tropic seas. Even more than Dobbin, Home is a pitiful relic of former adventurings; left with his vague memories and dreams alone, not even the bright sherds that Dobbin broods upon. Blind faith blinded Home, and Slessor assigns the same cause to Cook's death:

*the trumpery springs of fate—a stone,*

*A musket-shot, a round of gunpowder,*

*And puzzled animals, killing they knew not what.*

By this last line, Slessor clearly absolves the murderers of any taint of evil; their action appears in this poem not so much unlawful or—more importantly—spiritually heinous, but rather

a brutish obeying of a brutish life-force. And that same life-force is what has left Alexander Home, whose dream of the tropics fades into rheumatically sentimentalism, mere jetsam. The final stroke of horror, of Home's sudden appreciation of the banality of old age, of the inevitable coming to dust, is starkly revealed in the last lines when the old relic, as he yearns for the south,

*putting out one hand*

*Tremulously in the direction of the beach,  
He felt a chair in Scotland. And sat down.*

Written with striking intensity and muscular rhythmic power, 'Five Visions' is as harsh a statement of fatalism—hedonism's inevitable aftermath when the pleasures of youth and health have gone—as we are likely to get in poetry. It is a much more urgently expressed fatalism than that of the poem 'Waters', in which Slessor simply records his belief that the water and the cables of the harbour will glisten long after his responses have been extinguished in death; and it is very far from the rather desperate self-assurance of 'Rubens' Hell', with that poem's desire for fleshly delight in the hereafter. For these rather faint reflective lyrics, 'Five Visions' substitutes an uneasy belief in the worth of human endeavour, and its inevitable defeat by chance.

In this poem, too, there is for the first time on a major theme a revelation of Slessor's approach to the physical business of poem-making. In an address to the Australian branch of the English Association in the winter of 1931, he said: 'The whole structure of poetry, I am convinced, rests on the use of the image, the choice of the concrete when the abstract would be less racking to the creator, and certainly less searching in its revelations of his power or lack of power . . . poetry's concern with rhythm is its employment as a sort of hypnotic agent which will urge the mind to vibrate at a lower level of consciousness than that of the spiritual world.'

As Cook with his sailors, so is Slessor with his readers: bewitching them by his rhythms, dazzling them by his concrete images, into a mental vibration at a submerged plane of thinking. But these bright visions of the world, this lulling, serve only to place the reader off guard when the shock of discovery—that all Cook's seeking has ended in blood and death—occurs.

In this context, too, some other statements may be worth hearing from Slessor; expressing his fondness for the 'extraordinary and unforgettable' opening of *The Waste Land*, which is 'indeed filled with the most splendid and haunting rhythms of anything written in our century', he laid down, in his lecture

to the English Association, some more precepts. 'The only test we can devise [for a good poem] is the ultimate success of the poem itself in transferring its beauty without loss to the reader's mind; and when this is accomplished, the poem is a good one, whether it be in heroic couplets or free verse, and regardless of dogmas for and against its particular medium.'

It is a belief stemming directly from Robert Bridges' *Testament of Beauty*, which Slessor has deeply admired and loved, and from Sacheverell Sitwell, whose *Bolsover Castle* played a large part in informing Slessor's art. There is something of Nietzsche's 'Write with blood and you will write with spirit' in it too; and we have seen to what despond this love for beauty of a purely physical and youthful kind has led the poet in his middle age. Indeed, the 'ultimate test' he would apply to a good poem, that of its exact conveyance of beauty from the poet's psyche to the reader's, can only seem uselessly gallant in the face of his own recognition of that beauty's impermanence; and this is seen nowhere in his work more clearly than in his most important poem, 'Five Bells', the elegy for a dead cartoonist, Joe Lynch, who was drowned in Sydney Harbour.

This poem, Slessor's most profound and tragic utterance, reflects in its mode a belief of his which he has expressed in print, that 'the reiteration of a word or phrase over several pages has an odd effect on the mind; done cunningly, it is possible that this process might so scour and scarify a familiar word of its encrusted associations, that the reader would suddenly see the naked word in its true significance for the first time'. The elegy's repetition of the word 'bells' is certainly 'done cunningly'. It so 'scours and scarifies' that it hinges the poem to the memory, and makes it in language and poetic idea an impressive tolling of grief, a sombre death-knell to Slessor's friend and to Slessor's poetry. He could not have written beyond it; everything he has written since has been a mere pendant; 'Beach Burial' (the title is unwittingly revealing) is almost an epitaph.

'Five Bells' begins with a re-assertion of the poet's love of free movement, his impatience with life's disciplines:

*Time that is moved by little fidget wheels*

*Is not my Time, the flood that does not flow.*

The poem certainly does not move on little fidget wheels; it moves with as pulsing, as light a rhythm as the harbour waters it describes. Slessor recalls a bushwalk in the rain, and the inconsequential things the two friends spoke of; he tries in vain to summon up the friend's face and voice: Joe in Sydney and

Melbourne, Joe drowning, Joe in the deep mud beyond recall. The poem is again about a human being whom the sea has defeated, and time has consumed; and the sense of loss is evoked with a cold precision that cuts to the bone:

*but all I heard*

*Was a boat's whistle, and the scraping squeal*

*Of seabirds' voices far away, and bells.*

Throughout, the poem's expression is extremely simple; the Anglo-Saxon derivation is used rather than the Mediterranean word; an occasional bravura stroke, 'the naphtha flash of lightning' or the 'spent aquarium flare of penny gaslight' recalled from *Darlinghurst Nights*, seem almost too sharply singular in their consciously played-down, reminiscent and mild context.

In 'Five Bells', Slessor is saying with Whitman: 'I am the man. I suffered. I was there.' And he makes the responsive reader chime it with him; by paring away the poem to the essence of what it wants to say, showing us its bone in sharp and distinct words, he has pulled us inside his experience. Yet in what way does the poem rise above this simple and personal utterance; does it, in brief, reach the level of a masterpiece?

Perhaps the question will have to be left unanswered for a time; there is something about its character which leaves *Five Bells*, for this generation at least, an isolated and indefinite poem. And its isolation and lack of definition in Australian literature spring from Slessor's own philosophy of negation, of transience and futility, which are summed up in this, his last and absolute declamation in verse. He has moved, in his poetic life, from vitalism to fatalism, and thence to a total extinction of the poetic gift. For those who perceived in the verse of his youth a disbelief in an eternal purpose, this is not a surprising development. With the vanishing from his own being of the things Slessor held sacred—youth, abounding health, the high surge of passion in the breast—he is faced only with the darkness he spoke of in his early manhood. Consequently, he has taken the only logical step; he has stopped writing poetry, and he can only 'live'.

*Charles Higham*



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# THE VANISHING DIARY OF ANNE FRANK

*Martin S. Dworkin*

MEN OF my unit went into two of those places the Germans had efficiently called 'concentration camps', but for which there are other names: Buchenwald, near Weimar, and Ohrdruf, near Gotha. What struck the mind, and remained, was the unbelievable. The greater the horror, the more it was necessary to select details to make the whole have some reality. At Buchenwald, amid the fantastic complex of gas chambers and furnaces, the great sheds filled with human debris piled to the roofs, what seemed to affect the men most of all were some strange decorative plaques. A day or so afterward, when an article in the service newspaper *Stars and Stripes* identified the objects as mounted pieces of tattooed human skin, the reaction was not quite melodramatic revulsion, but more a sudden, self-conscious formation of what had actually been seen. The journalistic account put things into place; the sentences, with their plain words and terse phrases, made the entire experience into something that had happened. One man rushed over to say that the things described in the article were the things he had held in his hands. Now, he knew that his experience had been real, and he knew what it was he had experienced.

At Ohrdruf, some indignant civilians from the neighborhood were being put to work digging graves and burying the bodies left untidily about when the camp was hastily abandoned by the guards. There were corpses with blackening gouges in the sides and back. One or two walking cadavers, their filthy rags flapping, explained that some of the starving inmates of the camp were able to eat the livers and other organs of those who died. Then, much as guides denoting sights of interest to passing tourists, they pointed out the ingenious arrangement whereby the furnaces of the crematoria heated the buildings of the commandant's headquarters. On the way out of the camp, one of the soldiers began saying that it all hadn't been real, that what we had just seen was a lot of propaganda. A few of the others in the jolting truck took this up, explaining why they did not choose to remember.

There are subjective limits to fact, as well as objective. The ways of knowing in which we are indoctrinated can alter or overlook occurrences, just as they give them the form in which they are knowable. It takes sensitivity, and sometimes—as any

newspaper editor or professor of history can testify—a lot of training, to recognize the significance of the unfamiliar: the ‘fantastic’, the ‘impossible’, the ‘inconceivable’. The very size of the horror the Germans had perpetrated was difficult to make into a fact, into something that could be known. Millions of people, torn out of civilized living; collected and shipped like cattle; their bodies duly numbered and tattooed; marched in dehumanized gangs to insect labors; penned up and stripped and gassed and burned and powdered and scattered or packaged for fertilizer; their belongings sorted and stacked; the fillings of their teeth dug out of their dead jaws and melted into bullion. By now, we say we know these things. But how can we know them? One person who is bereaved of one beloved does not know how the world goes on. Millions of people. Many of us, of course, do not care. But for those who can care there is the problem of how to know. And it is here that an articulate vision, as in a work of art, can create the conditions of knowing, giving form to the inaccessibly, bewilderingly complex and various realities that must be grasped. It is in this sense, of the problem of bringing all who can care to the state of personal bereavement, that we must read and judge the diary of Anne Frank, and consider its dramatizations on stage and screen.

The existence of this book, that it was written and that it was preserved, is itself a fantastic event. There is no exact way of measuring its effect; we can only cite its translations in 21 languages, its distribution in 95 countries—figures comparable today only to those tabulating the successes of diligently popularized trivia. The statistics alone say nothing of the meaning of the book as an experience to the millions upon millions of separate readers. Only in some grandly indefinite way can we speak of how this journal of one single young girl may affect the individuals who read it; of how it has come to incarnate the anguish of the shadowy, uncountable myriads of separate persons who were unspeakably degraded, tortured, and obliterated. And this indeterminacy is carried into the dramatized versions, with their inevitable transformations of the images the book evokes in each private, unique reading.

The problem of the play and film goes deeper than that easily labored old difficulty of whether it is possible to transcribe a book to stage or screen without ruining or cheapening its qualities. We may grant that each dramatization is a separate work, requiring judgment on its own merits first of all, with references to its source secondary, albeit necessary. But each transcription, however excellent, must also be seen in that

dreadful light of memory which is a kind of nimbus about the book. In that light, the original diary itself can appear incredible—too good to be what it is, too perfectly appropriate to have been left to a miraculous chain of chances; to be written in precisely this, exquisitely artless way; to remain intact in a pile of rubbish, while libraries and the records of centuries were lost; to be rediscovered in time to become a monument. A triumph of the book is that it has the grandeur to stand alone and undeniable as a work out of the enormity of what happened. In the light of actuality, and of its own unparalleled quality, all doubts and cavils about its authenticity are irrelevant.

But they return in considering the dramatizations—not any dramatizations, on principle, but these particular ones, on their merits. Not that the play and the film are not skilful, absorbing, eloquent in theme and execution in a drama and cinema pervaded by shrill irresponsibility and slick inconsequence. From its opening late in 1955, the play, by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett, has won a reception perhaps unique in theatrical history. Audiences in more than 30 countries have approached it with a deference, and even reverence, rarely accorded any kind of play-acting, no matter how serious. The film, produced and directed by George Stevens from the screenplay by Goodrich and Hackett, is likely to enjoy a wider response. In fact, it may be expected to heighten the intimacy of participation for many, according to the unique, quintessential nature of the movies as vicarious experience.

But it is in this intimacy, in the skilfully-engendered exercise of identification, that the film, following the play, perpetrates a fundamental falsity—that is not simply untrue to the spirit of the book, but projects back upon it unreasonable, ungrounded dubieties. Out of what must be seen as a carefully considered effort to universalize the imagination of a particular young girl, there emerges a picture of an imagination that is recognizable because it is all too familiar. The particular Jewish girl, born in Germany and raised in Holland, deeply, if still youthfully educated in the European literary tradition, with the meaning of her Jewishness vivid in every instant of her life, emerges as an apotheosized, yet theatrically conventional adolescent. The person of the play and film is knowable, but not in any way ambiguous, as is the author of the book. As a dramatized cliché, she may induce an illusion of recognition. But the very ease with which the audience is enabled to know her every mood and manner measures the mystery that is evaded—and enters a new doubt that so carefully commonplace a character could have

created so richly individual a work, that has become the torch to light up the faces of all the unknown dead in the dark spaces of our hearts.

It is not simply a matter of performance, but of conception. The authors of the play and film were confronted by an enormous technical difficulty. The book consists entirely of the impressions of the girl who is the principal of the drama. All the characters are seen through her eyes. Their speech is as she recorded it or recreated it. The book is a diary: subjective, capricious, marked by unexpected divagations and tantalizing brevities, changes of attitude and explorations of new paths of reasoning as a child was growing into puberty. The play and film transpose the viewpoint. The audience no longer sees and hears and feels via the sensibilities of the girl, but observes her as the protagonist of an ordered drama.

In principle, of course, this may be wholly legitimate, and even dramaturgically necessary—unless one were to argue the sovereign possibility that the book itself be somehow retained and personified—perhaps as a continuing narration. By whatever device, such retention might preserve and project not only the distinctive imagery, but the asides, the mercurial malices and freshets of sentiment, the passionate dissections of motives and outcomes—determinedly juvenile and yet so consistently astute; and, perhaps most important, the constant, characteristic literary allusions, criticisms, and even quotations.

The book is not something that was written *about* the girl, her family and companions in hiding from the enveloping horror. The book *is* the girl; it is all we have of the girl. And the book, *Anne Frank*, is profoundly, passionately intellectual, emerging from the intellectual and spiritual vitalities of a Jewish family which talked and read and sang together in several languages, wrote poetry in honor of festive occasions, argued about judgments of history and works of art, fought throughout its vigil, in constant fear, discomfort, and privation, to preserve not only its existence and essential virtue, but actually as well as symbolically the entire humane tradition of knowledge and humility, intellect and spirit, laughter and charity.

The book is not the Anne Frank played on stage by Susan Strasberg, and on screen by her much less skilled imitator, Millie Perkins. The girl portrayed is a signally American figure of thoughtless youth. In 1955, one of the few critics who regarded the play unfavourably, Algene Ballif, wrote in *Commentary* that the Anne on stage was ' . . . still another image of that fixed American idea of the adolescent, the central imperative of which

is that this species of creature is not to be taken seriously. (Unless, of course, he becomes a delinquent).’ In the Goodrich and Hackett versions of the book, the central poignance has been subtly diluted, in order to give it a familiar soft-drink flavour. The character of Anne is simplified to afford easy recognizability. The situation of the people in the secret hideaway is played out as a melodrama with an implied tragic ending, around a conventionally central love story.

The manner of the stress upon melodrama and romance is decisive here, and not any preconception of how a performable work might be constructed from the book. The possibility of alternative dramatizations, in fact, came up in a long and bitter litigation conducted against Kermit Bloomgarden, producer of the play, Anne’s father Otto Frank, and others, by Meyer Levin. Levin, author of *The Old Bunch*, *In Search*, and *Compulsion*, had prepared an adaptation of the diary in 1953, with a notable emphasis upon the Jewish character of the story, and an avowed purpose to retain as much of Anne Frank’s own language as possible. Levin’s charges of ‘fraud and deceit’ in the disposition of his prior claims to rights to dramatize the diary were not sustained in court. But a jury did award him the more-than-symbolic sum of \$50,000 for damages suffered in the inclusion of some of his original material in the version that was produced.

The merits of Levin’s dramatization versus that of Goodrich and Hackett are not at issue here. But the evidence in the case of the deliberate shift of emphasis away from the Jewish spirit of the book, and from its particular literary character, is of great significance. Once again, the choice of tactics in popularizing a complex work has effected a qualitative change in the work itself. To persons who may never read the book, the Anne Frank of the play and film may be an adequately moving image: not so brilliantly unique that she could not be any girl in the audience; not so specifically Jewish that she could not be a member of any group that might be suffering some transient persecution. To these people, this Anne Frank may not represent the millions of Jews who were obliterated, as much as the popular image of youth’s indictment of the adult world.

It may be another example of the inexorable punctuality of accident, that the book found in the rubbish of a place where a group of Jews had hidden from the Nazis happened to be the diary of a young girl. And it may be that the force of circumstance in our time has truly exacerbated the perennial anguish of youth in worlds it does not make. Of all the Jeremiads ever heard and unheeded, the most poignant and damning may be

the cries of the young, the innocents. But there is something symptomatic of the reigning juvenilism of our present popular culture in the way the play and film of the diary of Anne Frank transform its existence and meaning.

On stage, under Garson Kanin's direction, the melodrama and the romance were thematically dominant, but the theatrical distance from the setting and characters offered the possibility of perspective. From this distance, for example, it appeared that the Goodrich and Hackett dramatization set off the conventionalized adolescence of Anne by magnifying her own idealized image of her father. We may overlook invidious speculations arising during the controversy over the Levin version as to how much the stage Otto Frank had affected the actual Otto Frank in his decision to support the Bloomgarden production. But it must be said that the emergence of the father as so all-wise, all-prudent a figure of force, despite the restraint of Joseph Schildkraut's superb performance, adds more to the melodrama than to the sense of recreated actuality. In one aspect, the power of the father in the play grows in proportion as the power of the book is diluted in the dramatized character of Anne.

On screen, the camera's elimination of distance in the theatre, particularly in the use of close-ups, increases the imbalances of the play's transcription of the book. The least expression on the girl's face is not simply enlarged, but completely fills the enormous CinemaScope frame. Her scenes with the boy, which on stage already exaggerated the delicate, hesitant, and by no means paramount relationship described in the book, on screen become climactic—and misleading. The choice of Miss Perkins for the role of Anne itself says much about the conception of the book to be realized on screen. Her resemblance to the surviving likenesses of Anne is as the movies traditionally would have it; every similar feature distinctly prettier, and in ways quite according to topical, fashion-model modes of beauty. Her inexperience as an actress is treated as an advantage, with her limited but quite exhausting repertoire of lisps, pouts, and other mannerisms made to protest her sincerity in a role requiring a range from childish tantrum to grown-up introspection. Her age points up one of the ways whereby American movies during the past decade have catered to the self-glorification of adolescent audiences.

It is not accident that consistently places actors and actresses in their twenties and even older in roles of adolescents, but the reflection on screen of fantasied behaviour, making propaganda for actual behaviour in a deadly roundabout. The popular

## THE VANISHING DIARY OF ANNE FRANK

image of the adolescent, moreover, requires performers of greater age and experience for satisfactory dramatic projection and vicarious fulfillment. When this fashionable representation of adolescence is injected into the dramatizations of the diary of Anne Frank, what remains of the book vanishes before our eyes. In its place, we are left with quite another work. The play and film may possess many qualities that are comparatively worthy. But what they make of the heroine can have no more than fictional bearing upon the true tragedy of Anne Frank, the little girl who died, one among millions.

That tragedy had begun to be evaded at the moment it was discovered—and the evasions have persisted, perhaps just because the dreadful evidence proved so much. And the play and the film of the diary of Anne Frank are themselves evasions—although made by dedicated people with excellent intentions, and the courage to be serious at the rites of entertainment. For, the more fully the individuals in the audience are brought to imagine themselves in the place of the heroine, according to the design of the dramatizations, the more truly do they evade real confrontation of the archetypal victim. To only pity the girl, her family and companions in hiding is evasion enough. To be projected into vicarious participation in the particular, formally conventional romance and melodrama, however, leads to the inversion of pity to pity of self: to the purging of guilt, responsibility, and even memory in a catharsis of sweet sadness.

Sadness is not enough. The saddest truth of all is that a vast proportion of those seeing the play and film know little of even the facts of the extermination of six million Jews by the Nazis, and will not be led to knowledge in the theaters. The film reviewer of a leading family weekly, that happens to be Catholic in direction, can write a reverent appreciation of the Stevens production of *The Diary of Anne Frank* for the same issue in which a letter is published asserting that there was not one gas chamber in any German concentration camp, and that it is an 'old propaganda myth that millions of Jews were killed by the national socialists'. The letter applauds the opinions of one of the weekly's regular columnists, to the effect that continued concern with the Nazi atrocities is unwarranted defamation of persons of German descent everywhere, and that 'the rehashing of such bitter memories would hardly help (a tourist) enjoy his holiday in Germany'. The story of the little Jewess in the movie will not make Christians of these people, if the sacred drama of that other Jew has not done so by this time.

*Martin S. Dworkin*

# ££££'S

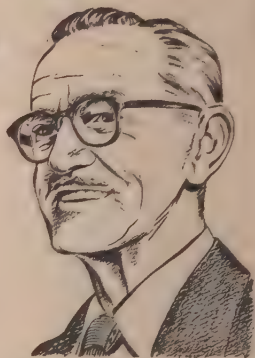
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## THE PLUNGE INTO THE NON-FIGURATIVE

Peter Winton

A POPULAR presentation of art history usually reveals current fashions of thinking with great clarity. The past is set in an evolutionary perspective; painters are interpreted according as they appear to be leading up to, or deviating unhappily from, the final consummation, namely, the type of art which dominates in critical circles at the moment. SELDON CHENEY's book, *The Story of Modern Art* (Methuen, 64s. 9d.), is no exception, and, so long as one allows for this, it is a competent and enjoyable treatment. The principle of evolution which guides his comments is that modern art has progressed by the subordination or suppression of the values connected with 'subject' in the ordinary sense. So we come to the triumph of 'non-figurative' or 'abstract' art.

This prompts me to some reflections, based not only on Cheney's representative popularization, but also on some other revealing recent documents. One is an essay, 'L'art abstrait: son origine, sa nature et sa signification', by Marcel Brion, an eminent art-historian and critic, published in *Diogenes* No. 24, 1958.

For Brion, most of the modern movements like futurism, the fauves, cubism, Dada, etc., are local accidents of a particular place and time in the history of European art; but abstraction, which is already a half-century old, is inaugurating a new world order of art. Brion rightly says that it is a mere misunderstanding to call it simply 'decorative', as if it were merely making pleasing patterns for the eye: it is rather the opposite of this. Islamic art, which Brion calls '*la forme abstraite par excellence*', with its non-figurative designs related to religious traditions, is a better analogy -- except that contemporary abstraction works from an extreme subjectivity quite foreign to Islamic canons. Not that Brion thinks it is for that reason devoid of religious potentiality: 'abstract art, on the contrary, appears as the perfection of religious art, since it expresses the religious sentiment in its pure state, without the mediation of figures which often deform this sentiment by the very manner in which they attempt to express it.' Whether this is as 'reassuring' as the writer thinks is another question, on which light is shed by what he says later.

At any rate, Brion rejects the idea that non-figurative art is excessively cerebral or intellectual: it is because the word 'abstract' suggests this that it is not a satisfactory term. On the contrary, it is essentially emotional: to a large extent, he says, it is employing emotional means like those of music. It represents a great aesthetic renewal, *not* because it refuses to represent pre-existing objects, but because 'the only thing that counts for it, as a plastic factor, is the given emotion'. This represents a 'liberation' of the interior life, hitherto constrained and imprisoned in figurative images. It is a 'departure, with all moorings cut, all boats burnt, towards an absolutely new reality'.

The alert reader will have seen already whither this is tending. Brion now comes out with it: in the 'Fathers' of abstract art (Kandinsky, Malevitch, Mondrian, Klee, Van Doesburg etc.) 'there is a sort of messianism, of johannism . . . according to which art should be the vehicle of a great philosophical message'. This art is to be a Fifth Gospel ('johannism'), it is to be a new esoterism or illuminism. Far from reassuring us that this is the great art of the future, and at the same time the perfect religious art, it begins to be recognized rather as an extraordinarily debased renewal of an old pseudo-mysticism. Thus we are told that it is 'the vehicle of an ever deeper descent

towards the secret heart of things, like a magical operation in the strongest sense of the word'. It is 'a visionary lucidity, a lyrical intuition, a poetical embracing of the cosmos, a seer's plunge into the World-Soul'.

Great art normally addresses itself *through* sense, feeling, form, image, symbol to the intuitive or contemplative intellect. Let us see what is proposed here as a nobler human activity.

Intelligence is banished; emotion is the sole way of access. There is no subject proposed for the intelligence but rather a pure invention, a 'non-reality', which one cannot ask to 'understand': one must merely encounter it, experience it—in a state of pure subjectivity. This is especially true of the 'informal' abstractionists who reject even that formal or geometrical organization by which some have tried to avert the threat of anarchy. It is the informalists who have gone furthest. Their published confessions recall an initiatic language: the abandonment of representation is a perilous break through into an interior state. And what is this state? Here we find all the post-Rousseau vulgarity of considering forms, conventions, limits, pre-ordained meanings as so many tyrannical and deforming fetters upon culture, a bondage from which 'the spirit' must be freed. The final condition would really be the void—the 'white upon white' of Malevitch, pure of all defilement by the real. But something else comes in between as the actual content of this pseudo-mystical experience: the artist invents 'in the passionate élan of creation this pathos-filled image of the self of the artist' (*cette image pathétique du moi de l'artiste*). This is evidently 'the religious sentiment in its pure state'. No need therefore for uneasiness or mistrust?

All the reason in the world if one has any notion of the destructive debasement of human culture involved in this heresy. On the other hand, once this movement is seen as a late de-intellectualized outgrowth of a recurring aberration towards antinomian illuminism, one may rather be reassured by the improbability that it will finally take over, however many naive spirits may be swept along by it, attracted by the pseudo-spirituality it offers. This is where the superficial popular guidance of Seldon Cheney may be regarded as unfortunate; for with any serious art it is not a matter simply of an ingenuous 'appreciation' of shapes and colours etc., fundamental cultural issues are always involved. This is the grandeur of art, which modern 'aesthetics' is ill-adapted to handle.

One need not deny that the abstractionist crisis is a genuine one. It is not just a stunt, but a response to real problems faced by the artists. There is no reason for disbelieving in the sincerity of serious artists who have felt an inner necessity to plunge into the non-figurative at the present time. Whether the non-figurative could perhaps have a different destiny, informed by a different spirit, is open to exploration, and some are trying to do this—with doubtful success. But it is important that we take seriously what the present abstractionism represents in the minds of its originators and initiates. Instead of being anxiously 'open-minded', of presenting at all costs a superficial receptivity to what is 'new', 'interesting' or 'exciting', we should accept the invitation to take this enterprise seriously as a particular kind of cultural movement—and reject it, if it is essentially an aberration.

In his introduction to a recent exhibition in Vienna, the critic Julien Alvard pointed to the Rousseauistic source of the modern artistic cult of natural spontaneous feeling *versus* civilization. 'The final impression is that instinct has carried the day. It heads the democratic poll. In fact, a hundred years of romanticism have culminated in abstract art!' He points to the frequent violence and aggressiveness of very many modern painters, especially the Americans: 'The necessity of crime or brutality as a synonym of strength and power is obvious to the onlooker and obsesses these actively involved.'

## THE PLUNGE INTO THE NON-FIGURATIVE

This is *le moi pathétique* of 'natural man'. The wish to revert to the primitive or the beast has been outstripped by the wish to revert to the vegetable, the mineral (or even to mere electric energy?). Alvard covers his bets, admitting that it is possible that all this is valueless and an illusion, but equally willing to back it as progress: 'That being so, one soon comes to understand that the final resource is to hit very hard. It may not takes us very far, but it is a youthful retort and bears the stamp of youth. Which is a good and reassuring thing. Another good and equally reassuring thing is that everyone is irresponsible.' One could apply these words to a justification of juvenile delinquency; and, indeed one psychological study of action-painting uses the term 'The Delinquent Academy', which Alvard thinks an excellent name. The descent from the 'lofty' abstraction of Kandinsky to this plebeian coarseness has been rapid, for there is nothing to stop it.

But of course it is all harmless. Nothing means anything; nothing has consequences, nothing is involved. We go to the galleries and look at the latest thing. What should youth do but be avant-garde? And don't forget that opposing modern art aligns you with totalitarian psychopaths like Adolf Hitler and Josef Stalin. . . . Above all, don't let us suppose that there are ever any real issues. It is better to stay in line. However, one must be nimbly ready to change when the line changes. The indications in Paris are that the new world-era of abstraction is already fading.

Peter Winton

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G. WRIGHT MILLS:

*The Causes of World War Three*

Secker & Warburg. London, 195. 9d.

C. Wright Mills knows—and hates—the American social landscape for reasons which are on the whole honourable. His analysis of the American social structure, contained in *Power Elite* and briefly restated in the present volume is misleading only in so far as 'ideal type' social theories (in Weber's sense) are bound to be misleading: Things fit in too neatly, mobile and hazy borderlines and contours are sharpened, and latent trends are treated as if they were glaringly obvious social realities. And, as Weber knew only too well, an 'ideal type' social theory in the hands of a pamphleteer writing for an unsophisticated public may be used to disseminate half-truths and to distort the picture of reality by over-statement and by suppression of negative evidence. Some chapters give one the uncomfortable feeling that the author is doing just that.

While Mills's knowledge of American society is intimately and oppressively personal, his picture of Communist societies is indirect, schematic, abstract and, therefore, unreal. The result of an uneven perception of society is the following disastrously inaccurate picture of the world situation: American pluralism is a sham restricted to subordinate positions of social power. A 'power elite' consisting of top brass and the top controllers of the privately incorporated national wealth have acquired history-making power in the US. They are in undisputed political command and they make decisions in a manner calculated to override the formal constitutional structure of America. The traditional social basis of American democracy—small businessmen and independent farmers—have been liquidated as an independent political force and absorbed into the amorphous world of militarized monopoly capitalism. American society has been turned

into a callous mass of politically helpless and indifferent ciphers, drugged by the mass-media and by consumer goods into passive acquiescence with the irresponsible rule of the high and mighty. There is no basic difference between the USSR and the USA. If anything, the USSR is a shade preferable, because its mode of economic planning acts as a safeguard against the chaotic irresponsibilities of a privately incorporated economy. The American and the Soviet power elites (the American more so) are obsessed by an inhuman and relentless military metaphysics which drives the world towards thermonuclear destruction. The intellectuals on both sides have abdicated their responsibilities as critics and have become willing tools of the warlords. Yet there is a way out of all this. American intellectuals must take the lead, use the formal freedoms still at their disposal and formulate programmes of survival. These include unilateral disarmament, the unconditional moral as well as diplomatic recognition of all Communist regimes, and an increased measure of state control over American science and industry. The present military and political leaders of the nation ought to be subjected to relentlessly hostile campaigns and hauled, if possible, before congressional committees to be exposed as illegitimate usurpers. A suitably transformed and disarmed America will, eventually, enter into peaceful competition with the USSR, organize exchange visits of intellectuals in luxury airliners and flood the underdeveloped countries with atomic generators.

It is quite obvious that Mills's basic recommendations—unilateral disarmament and moral as well as political neutralism—are in substantial agreement with the policies proposed by the spokesmen of the Communist bloc in our midst. Yet it must be stated as strongly as possible that Mills is not one of them. Some

of his incidental observations on American life and manners are devastatingly accurate and his most important charge against the American upper class—the charge of irresponsibility—is largely justified. The valetudinarian who played golf while Soviet tanks were crushing the bodies of working-class boys in the streets of Budapest—‘I did not ask them to rise’—has come to be regarded by many as a highly significant symbol of America’s high society, together with nymphomaniac heiresses and the rest.

Mills’s indignation is intelligently analytical and sincere—qualities for which one would look in vain among the stereotyped, callous and dishonest half-wits who, nowadays, make up the fellow-travelling livestock. How then can a man of his calibre advocate policies which would result, if adopted, in global Communist conquest in a very short time? Mills’s basic error seems to be this: He has correctly perceived that all modern societies have totalitarian trends in a vigorously pluralistic society. Even if his claim that American society is multi-centric only on the middle levels of power could be substantiated, it would still not follow that it resembles a totalitarian dictatorship. Pluralism on the middle level limits the degree of freedom of the power elite very severely and makes total social control impossible. Mills’s restricted range of personal experience and his extraordinary lack of imagination coupled with a sophisticated, yet highly abstract and schematic social theory, have conspired to make him say things which border, occasionally, on delusions. Thus, he seems to equate himself and other American left-wing liberals with the ‘dissenters’ on the other side, with men like Kolakowski and the Hungarian writers. It appears that he has hallucinated himself into a perception of social reality which obscures the difference between himself—a well-

paid, recently appointed academic celebrity with unlimited access to the platforms of the American cultural establishments—and men like Djilas and the rest, who are, literally, walking with death.

Mills’s book has already been used profusely by those who would like to goad us into a position of military helplessness. The organizers of Communist ‘Peace’ fronts whose retinue of phoney parsons, political swindlers and professorial bores has become somewhat shopworn will hope that here, at last, they have acquired an honest and brilliant front-man. They may be in for a severe disappointment: the art of frontmanship and the type of integrity which Mills possesses do not go hand in hand. It remains to be seen for how long Mills’s sensitive stomach will stand the unsolicited compliments now coming to him in large numbers from the Partisans of Peace, both in and outside the Communist bloc.

*F. Knöpfelmacher*

PETER F. DRUCKER

*The Landmarks of Tomorrow*

*Heinemann, London, 21s. 0d.*

It is difficult to be fair to this book; it is so irritatingly pretentious. Mr Drucker has served up a very mixed dish of some novel and interesting ideas, some ordinary intelligent comment and a good deal that is obvious and commonplace about the new world that is taking shape about us; but it is all written in the manner of one who is conscious of his brilliance and originality. It is the sort of stuff that one can imagine would earn Mr Drucker the reputation of ‘creative’ thinker that the publisher’s blurb claims for him, when delivered with all Mr Drucker’s self-confidence as a luncheon speech or as ornamental introduction to Mr Drucker’s lectures on management and business organization given to ambitious and deferential young aspirants for managerial posts. But when it is down in print, with time to pause

and consider, it does not look very impressive, despite Mr Drucker's clothing it in the latest scientific jargon and striving for new concepts and new syntheses all over the place.

In the first part of the book Mr Drucker introduces us to 'the post-Cartesian world view' he can see emerging and which will distinguish the next era of world history from the preceding three centuries. What he sees is that the whole is no longer the sum of its parts but 'the parts exist in contemplation of the whole'. 'Causes' are passé, 'configurations' are now the thing. The underlying order of the universe is not 'causality' but 'purpose'—not a purpose *outside* the universe, mark you, but *in* the universe. It is not metaphysical but physical. 'Progress' is out, 'innovation' is in. Change is a-moral, but 'Innovation is ethics' because it can be organized.

What all this talk about 'the purposeful universe' and 'Innovation' leads up to is 'the new power of diagnosing the needs of society and the capacity to organize men of knowledge, skill and responsible judgment, thus creating a new class of employed professionals'. In other words, it brings us to the practice of management in Big Business and the men who control it. One feels here a distinct drop in levels as in those impressive advertisements in the American business magazines that begin by discussing the high moral character of Socrates or George Washington and end with the name of some firm of insurance brokers.

The part of the book that deals with the things Mr Drucker knows about, that is, the problems of managers in Big Business, is very interesting. It deals with 'the organization man', and the unnecessary competitive tensions which create him. We are told how to make life more satisfying for the technical and professional men in large-scale organizations by giving them power and responsibility commensurate with

their importance. (Characteristically, Mr Drucker sees these problems as *the* social question of the day.) There is criticism of the view that authority is delegated from the superior to the subordinate and insistence that each man exercises his own knowledge and skill and should, therefore, have the authority appropriate to his function. And there is discussion of the organization in sickness and in health and many other aspects of this subject.

Mr Drucker's analysis of 'the Educated Society' and its class structure are also worth reading, but when he leaves his home-ground of business corporations and their social impact and gives us his opinions on other matters, we see his limitations. He looks at everything through the heavily-framed spectacles of the corporation executive and his views might be taken as the very ideology of Big Business. Western civilization is to him 'business civilization' and the foreign policy of the USA an attempt to convince the uncommitted nations that the local planning of Big Business is superior to the centralized planning of Big Communism. On the subject of Communism he gets hysterical and just rants. Big Government and the administrative agencies that might be able to dominate Big Business Mr Drucker dislikes only a little less. The political system he wants is pluralism and the free competition of autonomous business corporations. Other sorts of pressure groups, he thinks, try to subordinate the general interest to special interests. (But 'what is good for General Motors is good for America'.) The American political party is a triumph of political pluralism and shows its superiority over the parties of other countries which ignore the national welfare for doctrinaire righteousness. He is concerned about the irresponsible attitudes of labour leaders. Intellectuals are irresponsible, too, presumably for questioning the assumptions and pretensions of Mr

Drucker's business civilization. We need a new political philosophy built around the figure of 'the conservative Innovator' (guess who that is), but most important of all—'Society needs a return to spiritual values, not to offset the material, but to make it fully productive.' Even religion it seems is to be harnessed to the purposes of Big Business. *Tom Truman*

JUDITH WRIGHT:

*The Generations of Men*

*Oxford University Press. 45s. od.*

A. R. CHISHOLM

*Men Were My Milestones*

*Melbourne University Press. 27s. 6d.*

Just as Stephen Spender's *World within World* marked the limits if not the end of Spender the poet, so does *The Generations of Men* appear to mark the limits of the poet in Judith Wright.

If the essence of creation is to overpower what the poet is first possessed by and to give the recreated reality a unique impress, *The Generations of Men* is an unfavourable augury for the future of Miss Wright's verse.

For although, as it should, it exerts a great influence upon the reader, the subject with which it deals exerts too great an influence upon Miss Wright.

That subject is the story of May and Albert Wright, the story of pioneering pastoralism in Queensland and northern New South Wales. And the sadly depressing thing is that Miss Wright's evidently sincere attachment to the memory of her forebears forces her into modes of expression which, in Miss Wright the poet, ought to be impossible.

Thus Miss Wright fails entirely to bring the reader into her relationship with Albert. For Miss Wright, he is a human symbol of man's insignificance in the inexorable processes of time and climate, a figure so tragic as to enslave her heart. But for the reader, he remains a humourless gradgrind in whom the only classically tragic quality is the habit of self-

pitying introspection which prevents even the modest rewarding of his uninspired industry. And so Miss Wright the poet suffers death at the hand of Miss Wright the descendant of her subject as she describes Albert's first experience of a dust storm: 'The house this morning was thick with dust, the mirrors and glass filmed over, the food gritty. Dust—but where had it come from? He could not yet solve the puzzle.'

When thought for the health of his family brought Albert from Nulalbin, the Queensland run, to Wongwinda in the New England district of New South Wales, the change brought little improvement in his fortunes. Habitual anxiety about local conditions was heightened by worry about his continuing interest in Nulalbin and his share in a station in the Gulf country.

Miss Wright takes the opportunity of a journey to visit these northern concerns to set Albert soliloquizing, and in the course of it, he dumbly approaches the misunderstood core of his own failure and the reasons for May's success in handling the property after his death from an illness of accumulated exhaustion in the last stages of this same journey: 'Money, security, prosperity—those three words had led him on as they led the others, clawing at his very sleep. They had built the cities that had grown so much larger and noisier during his lifetime: on his visits to such places, he felt nowadays discomforted and uneasy. Doubtless they would build cities larger still. Words of power, but not words of life. . . .'

Perhaps it is important that Miss Wright sets the scene of this soliloquizing away from May. For with her, the tragic quality in Albert, the quality of introspection which can bring him to the brink of his deepest misery, but not beyond, is lost. For May is a commandingly ordinary person who can find her own state of blessedness in the merely practical.

Even in her marriage, Miss Wright suggests nothing consciously beyond unity and devotion in ordinarily practical things.

After Albert's death, Wongwibinda flourishes; and Miss Wright yields to the spell of May's personality where before, as poet, she yielded to her love of Albert's. What began as a drama of conflict between external nature and unsettled personalities seeking security in subduing a hostile environment, and was spoiled by Miss Wright's failure to subdue her natural family affections, ends upon a note of strangely artificial personal climax.

All has gone well; adjoining properties have been absorbed and the typical 1929 domestic apparatus of maids, a gardener 'in the strawberry beds', and a chauffeur, is in full function. There are too, so we are told, 'paperweights and ornaments brought back from the trips overseas, from Italy, from England, from France and America'. And amongst it all, 'a solid, active old lady' crumbling cake for the birds, disinclined to write her memoirs—'writing tires her—words, too many words and not enough action . . . beloved, beneficent, dogmatic and more than a little feared. . . .'

The upshot of all this is that while Miss Wright has undoubtedly produced a most interestingly poetic piece of prose, *The Generations of Men* is neither a compelling family chronicle nor a satisfying poetic synthesis. For, too often, as it seems, do Miss Wright's family affections overmaster those profoundly universal sensibilities which we have learnt to appreciate in her poetry and which alone could have saved the emotional architecture of this book from the collapse which follows the first and immediate seduction of the senses by Miss Wright's superbly emotive facility in the use of words.

Professor Chisholm's *Men Were My Milestones* is, by comparison, limited and direct. Serenely settled intellect

moves with evident satisfaction along the course of its various occupations during a distinguished academic lifetime, and leaves in its wake a series of studies in like personality which will be savoured and even relished by alumni of Sydney and Melbourne universities the world over. Not least will those whose 'flair' for the French language was dubbed by Nicholson an imposture, rejoice to learn that that gentle giant was afraid to let himself 'go' in French because, as he explained, 'I am always watching myself in case I should make a mistake; and that stops my spontaneous enjoyment of a conversation'. There are many similarly delightful touches in this 'feet on the fender' book.

Marlay Stephen

HARRY WELTON:  
*The Third World War*  
Pall Mall Press. London. 21s. 6d.

Mr Welton, an official of the British Economic League, has attempted to survey what he calls 'the new battleground—trade and industry', that is economic competition between the Communist bloc and the West. Regrettably, he has interlarded his account of Soviet advances in international trade, with a full account of Communist influences in the British trade union movement. The two do not hang together very well. There is obviously some relation between the economic effects of Soviet competition and of Communist led strikes. Mr Welton makes the mistake of overemphasizing the organizational link between the two. In particular, he exaggerates the influence of Communism in the British unions. This has declined catastrophically since the peak of 1949.

These are two aspects to *The Third World War*. The growing threat of Soviet economic expansion is the more important, though less fully dealt with. An account of Communist influence in the unions and through 'fellow-travelling'

groups is copiously documented, but surely less significant. Mr Welton attempts, in his interesting outline of the work of international bodies like the World Federation of Trade Unions, to present a picture of a carefully constructed plan to subvert the Western economies, to undermine Western confidence and to influence Western opinion. No doubt the Soviet Government has tried to do all of these. The author seems to overlook the possibility that many strikes, many political protests, many statements by public figures, may undermine Western morale without any conscious Communist participation or direction. Strikes and protests are not only unavoidable in a democracy but may be positively justifiable or beneficial. The logic of arguing that all strikes help the Soviet economic offensive is to take up the position that strikers are 'enemies of the people'. Mr Welton does not say as much, but his emphasis on the Communist influence in strikes, and his attempts to picture this as internationally controlled, may serve to strengthen such an attitude among the business community, towards whom most of Mr Welton's work has been directed. True, Mr Welton proposes a number of minor industrial reforms, mainly in the field of 'communication'. He cannot bring himself to admit, though, that a Communist may sometimes make a good, popular shop-steward who does little real harm if kept under control by his union or his fellow workers. Not much can be done about such a man in a democracy, except to wait for the almost inevitable disillusion which has been the fate of most British Communists since the war.

Mr Welton's tendency to lump all 'militants' together, as conscious agents of a worldwide Soviet plan, is most noticeable when dealing with the industrial situation on the waterfront. As in all countries, the British docks have long been a

centre of militant unionism. In London, the labour movement grew most rapidly in dockside areas after the strikes of 1889 which launched 'general unionism' in Britain. Thus the docks have a tradition of militancy extending well beyond the lifespan of the USSR or the Communist Party. Moreover, Communism in the Party sense, has never been as strong on the British waterfront as it has been in Australia. Despite this, the author builds around the Communist-inspired Canadian seamen's strike of 1949 a complete picture of Soviet sabotage of the waterfront. As an agent of this sabotage he includes the breakaway Stevedores Union. Now Mr Welton should know, and indicates that he does, that the Communist Party was strongly opposed to the Stevedores Union, and urged all Party members to stay inside the larger Docks Section of the Transport and General Workers Union. Thus the militant, non-Communist Stevedores Union can only be regarded as a tool of Soviet policy in the attenuated sense that by holding up the ports it was indirectly helping Soviet industrial competition. This is carrying responsibility a bit far.

*The Third World War* suffers by not being sure of the field it is trying to cover, by overstretching the Communist conspiracy thesis, and by muddled arrangement, which takes the reader from the Middle East and drops him into the Trades Union Congress. It is the competent 'scissors and paste' job, for which the Economic League is noted, with much useful information and quoted material scattered around. In the reviewer's opinion it greatly overestimates Communist influence in Britain. Nevertheless, the book does draw attention to Soviet economic competition, and to the functioning of the international bodies co-ordinating Communist activity in the interests of the Soviet government.

*James Jupp*

ELEANOR DARK:

*Lantana Lane*

*Collins, London. 18s. 9d.*

It is difficult to see on the evidence of *Lantana Lane* why Eleanor Dark should have such a high reputation as a novelist. If there were such a thing as an Australian *Punch*, one could easily imagine the sketches that compose this book appearing in it.

The book is concerned with various incidents that occur in a small community of pineapple-growers. Ostensibly it seems to be intended as a praise of the good life of the small farmer—a life more rewarding, despite its hardships, than that of other people. But in fact, since Miss Dark's main method of showing this is by demonstrating how all her characters—including a kookaburra bird and a literally incredible Frenchwoman—are 'characters', she is not very successful. Similar stories can be and have been told about similar 'characters' in all sorts of communities. In the sense that we talk about stage Irishmen these are stage pineapple-growers.

On the surface, all is realistic—'a faithful representation of a way of life abundantly worth living' says the blurb. In practice, the realism amounts to no more than admitting that small farming has its hardships, its monotony and drudgery, even at times its dangers. The pineapple-growers themselves, however, though they have their individual differences of temperament (these make them 'characters'), are singularly devoid of any of the baser instincts of man. One would not expect a book which does not really profess to be more than a collection of light sketches to display much concern with, or even sense of, evil; all the same, it would have been a relief to this reader, at least, if someone in *Lantana Lane* had been the least bit humanly bad once in a while.

Miss Dark's style is one of bright and knowing chattiness: 'But the garden [of Eden] (containing as it

## THE OBSERVER AND MR. KHRUSHCHEV

*"If democratic statesmen are to help their own people maintain their morale over the next five years (and if they don't we may be in a dreadful mess by 1965) they will have to become a little less gentlemanly and mount a propaganda counter-offensive to meet the Khrushchevian disarmament offensive. If Mr. Khrushchev was cynical enough to dig up an old speech of Litvinov's and rehash it for the General Assembly, President Eisenhower might get his rewrite man on to President Wilson's Fourteen Points and then tag on a bit about ballistic missiles. As it was, Mr. Khrushchev laid everyone flat: reactions were either silly or far too cautious. The way to meet what purports to be a bellow for peace, but which is also by implication part of the power struggle, is to expose it for what it is—and then bellow twice as loudly for peace as the other man. The Western democracies have an overwhelming propaganda advantage on their side: they will agree to an international inspection system and the Russians will not. They should use it." (From The Observer, October 3, 1959.)*

Sane purpose is the only justification for a political paper. From the extract above, judge for yourself how The Observer fulfilled its role in meeting the Great Challenge of Mr. Khrushchev. At a time when the popular artifice of this clever Communist distracted the attention of many in the Western democracies from the defence of their individual liberties, The Observer did not hesitate to bring an unsentimental and critical eye to bear on the true motives of tyrannical Communism. This surely is one reason why so many pay 1/6 every fortnight to read The Observer's assessment of foreign affairs—perhaps the best Australian periodical assessment available.

did, samples of every form of vegetation), was more than one pair of hands could dress and keep, so Eve was rung in to help—as she still is on all one-man holdings.' After a time, this becomes as tiresome as hoeing rows of pineapples must be.

If this review seems a little hard on a book which is less pretentious than its blurb, it is because one feels all the time that Miss Dark both knows her subject and is capable of writing well; and one wishes that she had devoted her talents to a novel dealing more seriously with Lantana Lane than these slight and in the end tiresome sketches do. Many books like this would make it necessary for someone to write an *Australian Cold Comfort Farm*.

T.H. Jones

NORMAN B. TINDALE and

H. A. LINDSAY

*Rangatira*

Rigby, Adelaide, 13s. 6d.

A few years ago Messrs Tindale and Lindsay put their hand to *The First Walkabout*—a story dealing with the coming to Australia between ten thousand and fifteen thousand years ago of the Negritos who preceded the Aborigines we know. Very interesting facts were held together by a barely adequate story and a simple, direct style. The book was well illustrated, and was a good choice for the 1956 award made to the best juvenile of the Australian year.

*Rangatira* is much better still. There is more substance to the story, even if the narrative is now and again rubbed bare from the weight of the very interesting facts it is too obviously made to carry. The book deals with those Vikings of the Pacific, perhaps the greatest seamen ever, the Polynesians, when in 1200 AD they were still full of prowess, and were engaging in settling New Zealand by repeated migrations from the north. According to the authors, Aotearoa, the Maori name for New Zealand, means 'Land of

Long, Bright Days'—which makes very good sense seeing the migrants came from equatorial islands and would be struck by the length of the summer days in their new land. This meaning, of course, is debatable, as are some other items touched upon in the story concerning navigation methods used and primitive religion, but such points are of no importance at all in the story.

It is good to see definite characters arising above the general flux, like Perere who makes a voyage from New Zealand to our own land; like Hine-Marama, 'The Moon Maiden', and Kura whose death closes the book. Somewhere between them the authors have considerable imaginative power to which they would, perhaps, be well advised to give freer rein, though the wiping out of an entire troop of fifty warriors by seventeen opponents and a few women in open fight appears to be drawing the Anglo-Saxon longbow too much. Truly vivid passages light the story, however.

All told, *Rangatira* is a particularly good book, top class for children from ten years old up, and quite worthy of the attention of adults, not too blasé, not too literary-critical. Douglas Maxted deserves special mention for his cover design and illustrations. At 13s. 6d., the book is little short of being a great wonder. The information given in the copious notes at the end is worth much more than that by itself. Over and above are a dozen other things, not the least of which is the grace of simple prose: 'She sang softly to the little one as she rocked him in her arms. Men had the advantage in most things, but the joy of motherhood was something they could never know. . . .' Martin Haley

J. A. HEMPEL:

*Italians in Queensland*

Australian National University.

As the European countries' economic situation has improved and our

geographical position seems less enviable than it did some years ago we must select more Italians if our immigration intake rate is to be maintained. Hence it is well that we know as much as possible about those Italians who have already come here. Dr Hempel, of the Queensland State Immigration Department, has written a monograph on the Italian migrants in Queensland; it is a valuable contribution to the study of Australia's largest and possibly most misunderstood minority.

Dr Hempel makes use of his knowledge of Italy, the experience gained while engaged in the placement and after care of migrants, and the State and Commonwealth immigration records. Detailed statistical analysis precedes most of his general comments. The most interesting of these are as follows: the low rate of marriage between Australians and Italians is not due to the unwillingness of the Italians to take part in our social life. But often they find it hard to enter our social life, sometimes they cannot even discern that it exists. They are thrifty and do not indulge in beer drinking. Although they invite Australians to their homes they are rarely invited to an Australian home. They are apolitical and their clubs are formed because of the desire to get together on a personal level as some substitute for the 'piazza' social life. They have no feelings of xenophobia and are uninterested in the ideological background of the organizations which will provide them with social occasions.

This exclusive interest in personal relations makes them bad unionists and precludes them from becoming a political pressure group. There are strong unionists and organized political groups in Italy but mainly in the cities while our migrants are drawn almost exclusively from the small villages.

The Italian migrant is more than any other 'homo oeconomicus'. He wants to be left alone to attend to

his work and family. When established he will marry, possibly returning to Italy to do so, and gradually bring out other members of his family in a cumulative chain migration which assures that the newcomers will be economically established and gradually introduced to Australian life. The Italians have an exceptional capacity for saving and show a strong desire to gain independence by buying their own land or business. With their industry and enterprise they have contributed greatly to Queensland's development. It is obvious that a prime factor in the success of migrants is occupational adjustment.

These are some of the most interesting conclusions of a basic research work which examines thoroughly the available evidence. Some conclusions are tentative because they are based on figures which do not take into account the many Italians who spend a short time in Queensland before heading south where there is more industrialization and less uncertain seasonal work. The number of cases is often too small to permit confident generalizations. This prevents a satisfactory study of the various generations of migrants. Some American sociologists have found a pattern of withdrawal, acceptance, modified return to the original culture in the three generations of migrants to America; it is possible that a similar pattern will apply here.

Desmond O'Grady

JOSEF PIEPER:

*Happiness and Contemplation*

Faber & Faber, London, 20s. 9d.

Josef Pieper was introduced to the English-speaking world by the publication in 1952 of *Leisure the Basis of Culture*. That book consisted of two short concentrated meditations: one on the title-subject, the other on 'The Philosophical Act'. Pieper has a preference, which readers are likely to find agreeable, for moderate-length essays.

The theme of this work is closely related to the central propositions of *Leisure the Basis of Culture*. There he interpreted for modern consciousness the Aristotelian-Thomist tradition of intellectualism, i.e. of the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake. The 'leisure' he defends as of a higher order than practical activity is not idleness but that state of disengagement in which the mind can attain true disinterested contemplation. This contemplation is what Aristotle meant by 'theoria'. It is essentially non-utilitarian and free: 'The loss of "theoria" means *eo ipso* the loss of the freedom of philosophy; philosophy then becomes a function within society, solely practical. . . .' In another work, *The End of Time*, a meditation on the philosophy and theology of history, he comments on the withering away in modern times of the metaphysical propositions which are the objects of 'theoria' and sees us moving either towards the pseudo-philosophies which are merely the political ideology imposed by totalitarian States for a utilitarian purpose, or towards the end of philosophy as an inquiry concerned with 'the roots of things'.

The present essay consists of a meditation on the sentence of St Thomas Aquinas that: 'The greatest happiness man can achieve lies in contemplation.' It examines acutely the central proposition of that traditional 'wisdom' of which philosophy was once held to be a seeking.

ROBERT DOUGLASS BOYS:

*First Years at Port Phillip*

Robertson & Mullens, Melbourne. 42s. od.

The reprint of this work, which has been out of print, will be welcomed by students and amateurs. By a chronological method the growth of settlement at Port Phillip 1834-1842 can be observed in vivid

detail. Small touches are rightly not omitted. There is much charm in noting that on 10 December, 1803, the Rev. Robert Knopwood set his 'white hen on 21 eggs this morn', and that on 8 January, 1804, 'my brown hen had 7 young chickings'. Or we move to more stirring events in 1838, when the Melbourne Race club had a two-days' meeting in March, concluded after various horses had bolted and one broken its neck, by 'running for pigs with their tails greased, climbing greased poles, and leaping in sacks . . . much to the delight of the labouring population'. In May of the next year Melbourne had its first duel, between George Arden, editor of the *Port Phillip Gazette*, and Dr Barry Cotter. A novelist need only go through this to have on hand the material for another historical novel—which may the heavens avert.

DONALD DAVIE (editor):

*The Late Augustans*

Heinemann, London. 10s. 9d.

This selection of longer poems of the late eighteenth century is illuminated by Donald Davie's excellent introduction, in which he examines the impact of industrial and social change as well as the influence of literary ideas. Incidentally, he challenges the idea that the Augustan order in morals and art was overthrown by the power of rebellious feeling: in influential poets like Gray, Shenstone, Collins it was timidity and low vitality that caused dissent. 'One comes to think, indeed, that it was enervation, not energy, which fretted most under the Augustan dispensation.' The most massive and forceful personality, Samuel Johnson, was the most stubbornly Augustan: 'for it is the mind which knows the power of its own potentially disruptive propensities that needs and demands to be disciplined.'

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